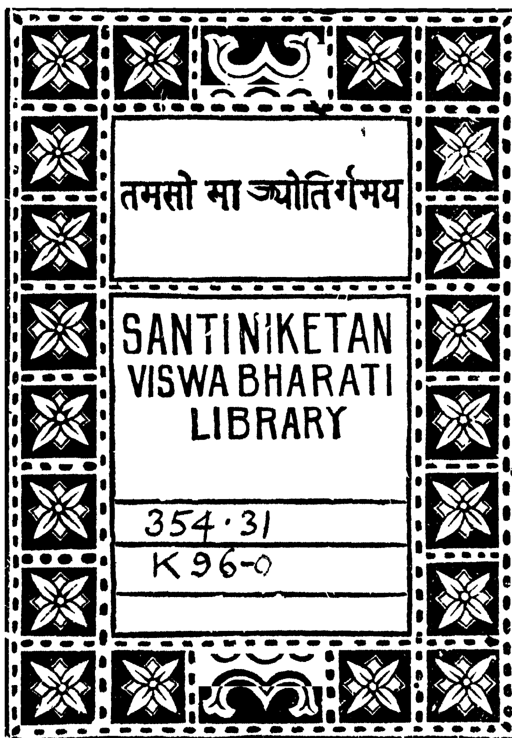


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OUR BEGGAR PROBLEM

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OUR BEGGAR PROBLEM

HOW TO TACKLE IT

EDITED BY

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INTRODUCTION

Every social problem that we encounter demands of us a solution; but a practical solution can be arrived at only through an intelligent understanding of the nature, extent and root causes of the problem. The beggar question is no exception to this rule. While the beggar in India has always been an object of charitable attention, the beggar problem as such has seldom been a subject of rigid scientific inquiry. No doubt, there have been a few local studies and regional investigations but no definite research has been conducted on the problem in its entirety and proper perspective.

There are some fourteen lacs of persons in India whose sole means of subsistance is begging. This huge army is composed of both sexes and of different physical and mental traits. There are those who are able-bodied but lazy and prefer to live by begging, and there are those who are unemployed and must perforce depend on others for support. Then again, there are religious mendicants who have taken a vow of poverty or find dependence on charity an easy way of making a living. But these are not all; there are the disabled ones—the blind, the crippled, the deaf-mute as well as those who are mentally deficient and others who suffer from numerous horrible and loathesome diseases—and the little children, with and without parents, who are victims of neglect or exploitation.

In this volume an attempt is made to deal with the different aspects of the question in order to give a synthetic view of the beggar and the beggar problem. It is assumed that the destitute is as much a burden to himself as he is to society. Perhaps for its own sake as well as in the interest of humanity, society should bear a greater share of responsibility in providing for his care or treatment. For this purpose it is necessary to

have a scientific appraisal of the subject as a whole. Therefore, the problem is studied here from different angles by writers who are specialists in their respective fields. While each chapter has unity and individuality of its own—which accounts for slight overlapping in some places—it is here linked up to the others in a series of comprehensive progressiveness.

Writing on the types of Indian beggars, Dr. Cama gives us some fifteen categories under which they may be grouped. Although her study of exploited child and of the physically and mentally defective exposes the unnatural and repulsive practices and conditions prevalent among the beggar population, it brings out clearly the needs of each type, an understanding of which is necessary for tackling the problem scientifically. "Beggary," says Dr. Mukerjee, " is a symptom of social disorganization." The major factors making for its prevalence are to be found, he points out, in the breakdown of the socio-economic structure of the country.

As one without any means of self-support and existing upon the charity of others, the destitute develops some distinctive mental characteristics, and the late Dr. Sen Gupta gives us a psychological analysis of the beggar personality and shows that "the beggar exhibits a certain deficiency in durable emotional-ideational-motor orientation to the situations that daily life precipitates", and that he represents a case of mental atavism and a throw-back to an earlier social order. Whatever the root cause of this problem, the beggar profession is a social evil. Dr. Das Gupta is of the opinion that from the point of view of public health, beggars with communicable diseases are a prolific source of infection and in consequence they are a menace to the health of the public. In spite of it all, these people are allowed to wander about from place to place, to grow in numbers from day to day and organize themselves into a profession. Mr. Bhatia, who has carried out an investigation into this aspect of the beggars' group life, points out that they tend to evolve into a highly systematized units with administrative machinery of their own. Such associations exist in various parts of India. In tackling the beggar problem, it is necessary, he maintains,

to attack the units of which they are a part and reorganize them for productive effort. He thus brings to light an aspect which is not commonly known or recognized.

Though the problem of the disadvantaged and under-privileged is not a new feature of our social life, yet it has, in modern times, increased both in extent and intensity. Dr. Moorthy, therefore makes a historical survey of pauperism and points out that while individual charity and State aid played a great part in caring for the destitute, the socio-economic structure of ancient India minimized begging and distributed equally the incidence of relief. Now that the old structure has all but broken down and State help has disappeared, the problem has become more aggravated. The beggar now depends almost wholly on indiscriminate charity which encourages thousands to join the legion of paupers and destitutes.

Is it desirable, one may ask, to make such large numbers of people depend for their living on public charity? If we have to maintain them, is there no other way less demoralizing and more scientific than unorganized alms-giving? Both Dr. Mehta and the late Dr. Titus answer this question at length from different angles. The present method of giving relief not only is far too intermittent to be of any abiding value but makes the diseased poor move from one locality to another spreading infection. Further, it encourages hoboism and idleness, and derpives the nation of some of its manpower. Nevertheless, the idea of giving alms has a mighty hold on people because of the sanction of religion. It is pointed out that in all early societies the salvation aspect of charity was emphasized as far as the giver was concerned but that the receiver of the gift was not treated as a personality.

In the West the growth of cities, rapid industrialization, spread of democratic ideals and changes in social and religious life have all brought about new conceptions of charity and new techniques of dispensing it. We too must introduce modern methods, re-orient our charities and vitalize our social services. Dr. Mehta makes out a case for the rationalization of our beggar relief. Charity, he declares, needs to be guided along scientific

lines. For this purpose proper agencies should be set up to guide the giver and the receiver alike. A well organized system of scientific philanthropy will help greatly to reclaim thousands from a life of dependence, and make them self-supporting and self-respecting members of society.

Is it not possible, some may ask, to abolish beggary through legislation? In some of our cities the law empowers the police to apprehend any one who asks for alms. But mere arrest of such a person is no solution of the beggar problem. It is as useless to have laws without proper Homes to detain and rehabilitate beggars as it is to have Homes without legal authority to commit them to such institutions. Therefore, it is imperative to have legislation as well as Homes or Colonies where beggars could be received, classified and treated according to the needs of each individual case. In the absence of such machinery, beggars have no option but to resort to begging, and laws cannot but be ineffective. Dr. Bulsara deals with this aspect of the problem and gives an interesting and detailed scheme with an approximate estimate of expenses for running a colony.

A good scheme such as the one formulated by him can be effective only if it is backed by proper legislation. Hence, Mr. Barnabas gives us a critical account of Vagrancy Acts in some of the Western countries, and of the statutes relating to the prevention of beggary in the various Provinces and States in India. Further, he suggests salutary changes in the existing beggar legislation to make it more useful. In addition to statutory provisions, it is necessary, as has already been pointed out, not only to start beggar colonies but also to direct the present individual charities along institutional lines.

Modern industrialism has brought in its trail manifold risks and hazards which are daily increasing the problem of poverty and dependency in India. Much work is being done in other countries in the field of social security, but in India the workers and their families are badly neglected with the result that many of them become destitutes. Therefore, Dr. Kumarappa makes a plea in the concluding chapter for social insurance against industrial disability, superannuation, maternity risks and such

other ills to which the poor in general and the workers in particular are exposed. While social security measures will go a long way in minimizing pauperism, only a thorough reorganization of our social and economic life, he believes, would help ultimately to eliminate beggary.

No claim is made here for an exhaustive treatment of the subject. Nevertheless, it may be stated that this is the first book of its kind, bringing together a lucid analysis of the problem by writers who have made a deep study of its different aspects. These chapters were originally written by them as articles for *The Indian Journal of Social Work* of June and September, 1943. In view of the demand for them and of the importance of the subject, it was decided to put the articles together in book form. Most of the chapters have been revised and illustrations have been added. Our thanks are due to the authors for revising their contributions and giving us permission to reproduce them. It is hoped that the ideas and suggestions contained in this volume will stimulate and provoke thought. If these pages provide food for riper deliberation and effective social action to control and prevent beggary, our efforts will not have been in vain.

15th January, 1945. J.M.K.

Bombay

TYPES OF BEGGARS

In our country beggary has become a gigantic problem. To find a satisfactory solution to this it is necessary first to undertake a scientific analysis of the various types of beggars. Therefore, the author Dr. (Miss) Katayun H. Cama discusses here the principal types with their sub-types in the hope that it will stimulate the social worker to approach this problem intelligently by making a more intensive study of the numerous types of beggars that exist in India and then adopt measures of rehabilitation suited to their several needs.

PERHAPS the most sinister of all social ills, or shall we say evils, is beggary. It is not without reason or deep thought and serious study that A. M. Biswas, the Founder-Superintendent of the Refuge for Beggars at Calcutta, has remarked, " the status of a place can best be judged by the number of its beggars. " It is a curse not only in respect to its immediate effect on its victim but it is the root of nearly every other social evil as well. Beggary constitutes a very complex social problem. It leads to physical deterioration, mental incompetency, preventable disease and starvation, and wrecks lives by forcing them into crime, mental abnormalities, family maladjustments, and social irregularities of every description. As it is vitally interrelated with other social problems

like unemployment, intemperance and poverty, its right solution requires the utmost care on the part of social workers and students. Indeed, beggary has assumed such gigantic proportions in India, that only a well-studied scientific approach may help us to arrive at anywhere near the beginning of a solution of the problem in its hydra-headed aspects. Some of the questions that baffle the sociologist are:—Why does beggary persist? What are the fundamental causes of the phenomenon? Can it be eradicated or is it to remain with mankind for ever? No satisfactory answer has yet been found. Yet, we know in part at least where the cause lies, but have been powerless, for some reason or other, to strike at it or to remove it. As no fruitful attack can be made on the cause, nature, prevention and cure of this serious social disease without fully understanding the variety or classes of beggars, it will be well for us to start with a study of the types of beggars that infest our society.

Beggars have been classified according to varied categories. The lay person usually associates the idea of begging with the unutterably poor, the disabled, the blind, the crippled and the diseased who seek assistance or charitable contributions. In Western countries where begging is not as acute a problem as it is in India and China, the classification of the type of beggars is rather limited. Irwin St. John Tucker[1] divides them into three groups—hoboes, tramps and 'bums'. According to him, "A hobo is a migratory worker. A tramp is a migratory non-worker. A 'bum' is a stationary non-worker". Somewhat more different than this is Anderson's[2] classification into seasonal labourers, migratory casual labourers, migratory non-workers, non-migratory casual labourers and 'bums'. In his opinion the 'bums' are the lowest of all the types of homeless men. They include alcoholics, drug addicts, old, helpless and unemployable men, the most pitiable and most repulsive of all the "down and outs". They are stationary non-workers who gravitate between the foot-paths and the jail, living on the charity of

1 *World Tomorrow*, 6: 262, 1923.
2 Anderson, Nels, *The Hobo*, p. 265.

their fellowmen. The beggars and petty thieves among the 'bums' are the most conspicuous of the homeless men. From this classification it will be seen that the reference is to homeless men rather than beggars and that the type, scale and seriousness of begging as it exists in India is not even dreamt of. These homeless men in Europe and America present a far different picture from that of the beggars in India who grovel in stark naked poverty, starvation, filth and disease. Means of "getting by" vary greatly with the different types of homeless men in the West. The hoboes work at odd jobs like those of dish-washers, potato peelers, waiters, janitors while in the city, and of lumber-jacks, teamsters, harvest hands while in the country. The non-migratory casual labourers depend a good deal on begging either openly or under the guise of peddling pencils, shoe-laces and such other articles. Sometimes they sell cuff-links, collar buttons, cheap eye-glasses and watches, "putting on a stunt" or making a speech to draw a crowd. Some of them pretend to be sick, deaf and dumb, blind or crippled. Others indulge in soapbox oratory and sell papers or books on the labour movement and pass the hat for their own benefit. Others exploit younger children making them sing or recite a piece with a view to making a sentimental appeal. Some make a speciality of exploiting the charities, while a considerable number try to gain sympathy by appeal to the clergy, the trade unions, fraternal organizations and the like with a "hard luck" tale. They beg and borrow from each other. They also rob each other, taking particular advantage of the man who is asleep or drunk. In mild weather they sleep in parks, vacant houses, box cars or in the open. In the winter they make themselves at home in railway depots, doorways, mission floors and pool rooms. They walk the streets at night and find a place to doze through the day. They beg openly on the street or shamefacedly at back-doors.

The downward steps in the demoralization of the homeless man are likely to be somewhat as follows:—(1) Inability to find regular work, (2) extended period of unemployment, (3) travelling in search of a job, (4) after a time travelling without working much, (5) wandering without working at all except

as a last resort, and (6) ultimately settling down in some city to live by begging. Thus we find that there is always the possibility of the regular workman becoming a hobo, the hobo a tramp and the tramp a ' bum '. In England this class of homeless men are called "incorrigible rogues and vagabonds". The beggar in England is described as consisting of "every person wandering abroad, or placing himself or herself in any public place, street, highway, court, or passage, to beg or gather alms, or causing or procuring any child or children (under 16) to do so". It also comprises "every person wandering abroad and endeavouring, by the exposure of wounds or deformities, to obtain or gather alms or endeavouring to procure charitable contributions of any nature or kind, under false or fraudulent pretence". It would be both profitable and interesting to study the measures adopted by England, America and the various European countries to combat the problem of begging and to meet the needs of these homeless men including the hoboes, tramps and "bums". But as such a study does not come within the scope of this chapter we shall proceed by way of contrast to examine the types of beggars existing in India.

The types of beggars in India may be classified and considered under the following categories :—(1) The child beggar, (2) The physically defective, (3) The mentally defective and mentally ill, (4) The diseased, (5) The able-bodied, (6) The religious mendicant, (7) The bogus religious mendicant, (8) The tribal beggar, (9) The employed beggar, (10) The small-trade beggar, (11) The temporarily unemployed who are employable, (12) The temporarily unemployed who are unemployable, (13) The somewhat permanently unemployed who are employable, (14) The permanently unemployed and unemployable, (15) The permanently unemployed who are viciously or incorrigibly unwilling to work.

This is by no means an exhaustive or complete list of the types of beggars as each broad division implies several sub-divisions. Nevertheless, it is somewhat helpful inasmuch as it gives an idea of the complexity of the problem and helps the social worker to view the problem in its proper perspective.

The Child Beggar.—It is no exaggeration to say that the most heinously victimised and exploited of the beggars is the child beggar. The child beggar may be a paid or unpaid assistant to an adult beggar. When he thus assists his parents or relatives his only reward is days of wandering and starvation and the tinkle of the copper coin in his bowl. Very often a child is just left on the streets to die, or often, if he happens to remain alive, to fend for himself. Such a child out of sheer destitution takes to begging until he is brought by the police to the Remand Home and committed to an institution for the protection and care of children, or to a certified school in the provinces where such institutions and schools are provided either by the Government or by the public or by some bodies or societies interested in the welfare of children. In many provinces and native states of India no such schools, institutions or societies exist, and the child is allowed to beg and roam the streets at large until in his adulthood he automatically merges into the incredibly vast army of professional beggars. Among other child beggars are those who are born defective, and those in whom the deformity is intentionally and knowingly caused by the parents for their own profit. The arm or leg is twisted after birth and the child is paraded in the streets to draw the maximum amount of sympathy. Others wilfully neglect to nurse the child until he appears to be on the point of death so that the public moved by the emaciated, anaemic and death-like appearance may pour out their nickels and coppers. Very often these parents are only too thankful if the child is congenitally deformed. Such parents look upon the child not as a human being, but merely as an object for arousing pity. The life, welfare or death of the child has no meaning in their scheme of existence. If one such child does, they are ready to produce many others equally defective or more so. Then there are the feeble-minded who fall an easy prey to the machinations of the most unscrupulous riff-raffs and sink to the lowest level of beggary and degeneracy. In contrast to the feeble-minded children are the perfectly normal, and intelligent children who openly and brazenly beg in the streets, trams, trains and railway stations. They either sing

or pretend to be blind and crippled. Others who work as shoe-shine boys often accost the public for alms, and still others do so under the pretence of selling some nick-nacks.

To illustrate how cruelly and in what various ways children are exploited, I may take the liberty of quoting a few passages from a speech given by Mr. K. M. Munshi (the Ex-Home Member of the Government of Bombay), under the auspices of the Tata Graduate School of Social Work :

" But beggary would not be a profitable trade if there were no children to attract the customer's attention. The beggar child, therefore, is the most valuable asset in the trade ; and as such is sold, bartered or mortgaged. The ordinary price at which a blind child can be bought is Rs. 5, that of a crippled one is Rs. 3. Some years ago I came across the case of a child which had shells put into its eyes to look like blind.

" What about the poor child? It is beaten, thrashed, branded into learning the arts of attracting your sympathy. Near the General Post Office a little boy, a short while ago, attracted the generosity of passers-by by piteous importunities. After hours of crying the boy would get tired ; the guardian who sat a little farther away branded the child's hand by a lighted *bidi* whenever the child's strength to whine failed. The man was caught red-handed and the child when examined confessed that for months together every day when its voice failed it was treated with the stimulant of being branded.

" Crippled children are also parked out in the city to beg. So-called upcountry orphanages also bring stray children and train them to beg in the city to collect funds for their institutions. Two mentally defective girls were found to have been trained to do monkey tricks in the streets for money. Once street acrobats dangled children by their hair as they walked on tight rope ; in one case an year old baby was swung by rope round its neck as the woman acrobat performed on the rope.

" There was one case of a boy who was trained to be deaf and dumb. In the Remand Home after seven weeks he gave up his training and was found to be quite sound. On one day at the Children's Aid Society the deaf and dumb boy spoke,

the blind one saw and the lame one jumped : a miracle which the prophets of old could envy! The child is thus an article of trade.

"Then again take another form of child slavery. Not far from where I am addressing you there are children, boys and girls, employed in brothels as menial servants. Throughout the night they fetch things from Irani shops to their employers and only when the Vigilance Branch of the Bombay City Police raids a brothel such children are reclaimed from the life of drudgery and vice to which they have been consigned.

"Another form of child trade in the City is that of the 'Champiwalas', the professional masseurs. Most of such boys are brought out from Northern India to slave for their employers and satisfy the homosexual instincts of the under-world. They ply their trade after midnight, these poor victims of homosexuality and venereal diseases. In one night 25 *champi* boys were brought for admission to the Children's Aid Society. They were all from Sialkot and worked in groups for men in the worst areas of the City. The employers arranged for the boarding of these boys and lived on their wages.

"There is another form of child slavery in Bombay which is literally shocking. Tender girls or boys from Goa, Mangalore and some other South Indian towns are imported into Bombay. Their age is sometimes seven and they are employed on a salary of Rs. 2 or 3 per month. The child slaves from early morning till late at night, often the only servant of a large family. It has no friends or relatives. If it fails to carry out any of its numerous duties or gets ill, it is punished cruelly often by being scalded with hot water or branded with tongs or live coals ; and is a victim for the sexual rapacity of any male adult in or attached to the master's family."

Most of these cases which Mr. Munshi has taken from the records of the Children's Aid Society, Bombay, show clearly how totally different and much worse off the Indian child beggar of the 7 or 8 types touched upon here is when compared with the dependant and neglected children in Western countries.

The Physically Defective.—Among this type of beggars may

be classed the blind, the deaf-mute, and the crippled and deformed. Besides these, there are the chronically under-nourished and those afflicted with various organic troubles, or weaknesses of the vital organs. Of the first named three outstanding types of physical handicaps, blindness seems to be the surest passport to the sympathy and purse-strings of the public. The erring, misguided and so-called charitably minded persons dole out their pennies to the blind so readily that the latter find it much easier and much more profitable to beg than to take to some industry after training and re-education. Neither the public nor the beggar seems to care for the schools or institutions for the blind. These institutions are hardly ever taken advantage of by the congenitally blind beggar and the one who becomes blind in old age.

The deaf-mutes again can easily be trained and absorbed in some industry or agricultural labour, but they too find the profession of begging much more remunerative. Very little thought has been given to the prevention of blindness and deaf-mutism as the blind and deaf and dumb are regarded as so handicapped from birth and the factor of later acquisition of these defects through accident, disease, old age or serious illness is ignored. There are many who can hear but cannot speak and several who can speak but cannot hear. Yet these are all indiscriminately classed as poor, handicapped, helpless persons fit only to beg. This attitude has encouraged begging to such an extent that many bogus beggars pretend to be blind, deaf or dumb, or both deaf and dumb.

The crippled and disabled constitute another very important sub-section of this type of beggars. The crippled must be distinguished from the disabled as those who are crippled in the sense of being dismembered, form a minority of those who are disabled. The Division of Re-education of the Minnesota State Board of Control has defined a disabled person as "Any person who by reason of physical defect or deformity whether congenital or acquired by accident, injury or disease is, or may be expected to be, totally or partially incapacitated for remunerative occupation". The problems presented by the disabled child and

disabled adults, while alike in many respects, differ in others. Most of the disabilities of children arise from diseases which, if treated in time, can often be cured. Some of the commonest causes of disability among crippled children are :—Infantile Paralysis, T. B. of the Bone, Spastic Paralysis, Cardiac defects, Rickets, Amputations, Congenital defects, Osteomyelitis, Arthritis, Obstetrical Paralysis, Sleeping Sickness, Accidents.

With the adults, injuries are more frequently the results of accidents, and there is less possibility of cure. Nevertheless, both require medical and surgical attention and care. The child needs special provision for his education while the adult frequently needs re-education. Among both adults and children are found those who may be expected to recover with little or no lasting handicap and in both groups are those who, by reason of congenital defects, amputations or paralysis, will always be disabled. Yet no crippled or disabled beggar in India ever dreams of seeking surgical or medical aid. In fact, he considers it his special advantage and privilege to beg and as mentioned above, not infrequently he actually causes the child to become crippled. Any loss or deformity of leg, arm, hand, foot, eye or sight is at once welcomed as an asset and exploited to the fullest to earn a livelihood by begging. Such are the perversities of the fraternity of the physically defective beggar and such the ignorance of the public who go on giving them alms instead of utilizing that very capital for establishing special institutions, hospitals and schools for medical, surgical and educational treatment of these handicapped individuals.

The Mentally Defective and Mentally Ill.—This type of beggars include the feeble-minded and those suffering from mental disorders. The feeble-minded may be variously grouped. On the basis of I.Q., Davies has suggested that " the nearest approach to a satisfactory definition would combine both the psychological and social elements and indicate an intelligence quotient below a certain level plus a certain deficiency in other personality traits leading to social inefficiency, as determining factors in constituting mental defect. "[1] On the basis of pathological

[1] Davies, S. P., *Social Control of the Feeble-minded*, p. 21.

conditions in the nervous system and other parts of the body, the feeble-minded may be divided into (1) the microcephalic (those with abnormally small skull), (2) the hydrocephalic (those with enlarged skull and propularly known as having water in the brain), (3) the paralytic and (4) the traumatic. On the basis of educational possibilities the feeble-minded are divided into those requiring (1) asylum care, (2) custodial life and perpetual guardianship, (3) long apprenticeship and colony life under protection, and (4) training for a vocation. On the basis of economic criterion the mental defectives are divided into three major groups: idiots, imbeciles and morons. Hardly any attempts have been made in India either to find out the number of feeble-minded, or to group them according to any of the criteria mentioned above, or to isolate them, or to locate them, or to institutionalize them, or to provide for their training and care with the result that the menace of the feeble-minded is getting worse. The mentally defective constitute a large proportion of the destitute, immoral, delinquent and criminal population among the beggars, and transmit their defect to their progeny. Yet our people seem to take no interest whatever in the problems presented by our mental defectives. In fact, most of them seem to be blissfully ignorant of the existence of any such problem at all.

If our people are indifferent to and ignorant of the problems of the feeble-minded beggars, they are still more apathetic to and ignorant of the problems of those suffering from mental disorders. Mental disorders such as maniac-depressive psychosis, involutional melancholia, dementia praecox, paranoia and the like are hardly ever known or thought of. Any person behaving queerly in the streets is considered insane and any manifestation of any of the above-named disorders is attributed to "insanity". Many beggars with mental disorders are allowed to rot in the streets and to lead an animal-like existence. Such a beggar may sit in one place for days together urinating and defecating in the self-same place, and he may be covered with lice, germs, mosquitoes, flies and other vermin until some crow comes and starts pecking all over him, but no one takes any notice of him.

Only when a beggar goes violently insane is he taken into custody and brought to the mental hospital. It really is a sad commentary on a nation that such a state of affairs should exist and such revolting and sordid sights should be seen and tolerated.

The Diseased.—Even more disgusting than the sight of the mentally deranged beggar is that of the beggars suffering from acute stages of venereal diseases, leprosy, epilepsy, T.B. and skin diseases. What is most inconceivable is the fact that hardly any attempt is made to segregate them, and they are allowed to move freely in the streets, hotels and trains to beg, no matter at what highly infectious stage the disease may be. Sociologists in India often rave about the high rate of mortality, but one wonders that there are not more deaths than at present considering such unpardonably poor control of preventable diseases. A great deal can be done if a nation-wide programme of prevention and cure of such diseases were adopted, but there is no education of public opinion in this direction and the diseased beggar hardly ever has recourse to the hospital as even the disease is exploited by the beggar as a means for getting alms from the public.

The Able-Bodied.—Much less nauseating but far more exasperating is the able-bodied beggar. This type considers begging its birth-right and bullies, harasses and troubles the public into giving him alms. If a person happens to turn a deaf ear or to remonstrate with him for not working even though physically fit, he will turn round and use such abusive language that the person retires within his shell and makes up his mind never to address a beggar again. If offered a job he will flatly explain that he is ancestrally a beggar and as he has never worked in his life, his bones are stiffened and his constitution will not allow him to work. If caught by the police and sent to a home or work colony, he will abscond the very next day saying he has never lived within walls and must roam freely in the open. He thinks it is his ancestral birth-right to pester the public and that no one has any authority to interfere with that right. No amount of change in sociologic and economic viewpoint and system will affect him as he simply refuses to work, however

attractive the wages and terms offered may be. Nor are enactments adorning the statute book any good. What is needed is a thorough and efficient machinery for the enforcement of the legislation prohibiting begging and the following up of a constructive programme after the arrests have been made.

The Religious Mendicant.—In a country like India inhabited by millions of Hindus and Mohamedans whose religions sanction the founding of mendicant orders, the solution of the beggar problem becomes well-nigh impossible. The beggar question will never be finally and thoroughly solved till the religious heads of these two great communities co-operate whole-heartedly with the Government, the Municipality and the social work agencies. So familiar is the figure of the Sanyasi, the Yogi, the Sadhu, the Vairagi, the Fakir and the Darvesh in India with all the paraphernalia of saffron robe, wood-bead-necklace, bowl in hand, etc., that it hardly needs any elaboration.

The Bogus Religious Mendicant.—Seeing the readiness and almost spiritual devotion with which people dole out food, grains and money to the genuine religious mendicant, many an able-bodied layman who has no affiliation with any religious order whatever but likes to get on without work dons the garb of a Fakir or Sadhu and profits by the generosity of the unsuspecting and religiously minded orthodox people. It is practically impossible to distinguish between the genuine and the bogus since indiscriminate charity encourages this type of beggars.

The Tribal Beggar.—Far different from either the genuine or bogus religious mendicant is the tribal beggar. These tribes move about from place to place singing and reciting poems, and begging; and they are quite welcome in certain parts of India. This type with its traditional songs and poems is unusually free from the viciousness of the city beggar. They correspond more or less to the minstrel and are vastly different from the various criminal tribes and gypsies who travel from one town to another in caravans and who are notorious for begging, thieving and dacoity. Very few places in India have criminal tribes settlements; and these beggars wander from province to province establishing colonies and camps wherever they happen to halt

or settle temporarily. When they come to the large cities they and their children live by begging and petty thefts. Some of the men folk try and obtain casual work whenever they can.

Among this class of tribal beggars may also be included the seasonal vagrant and the permanent vagrant. The seasonal vagrants comprise those migratory casual labourers who work on the fields or on some trade or craft in their native village during the season and in the off season migrate to larger cities where they live on foot-paths or open maidans, and maintain themselves by begging or stealing. They seldom find work and even if they do, they are incapable of sticking to one job and before they get settled in one job, they migrate to another place. The permanent vagrants are the migratory non-workers. They are purposeless wanderers who beat their way from place to place, begging for food, getting along in any way they can and carefully avoiding rendering any useful service to the world. They travel in tribal caravans and lead a carefree existence sleeping wherever they can and eating whatever they get. Some of them wander continuously, others only at particular times or seasons and still others at irregular intervals, and whatever be the difference in their modes of migration, they are all of a class in that they are confirmed non-workers. In any scheme of social reconstruction this type would be the most difficult to tackle not only because of lack of fixed place of abode but also because of the utter depravity to which this class has sunk.

The Employed Beggar.—This may seem a contradiction in terms, but in India there are a larger number of men and women who work night shifts in mills and factories and go out begging during the day. Very often they earn more by begging during the day than by their labour in the factories and mills at night, and therefore become irregular in their attendance at work. The unsteady nature of the job and extremely poor wages often serve as an inducement to begging. Thus we have the curious phenomenon of the night labourer becoming a beggar by day. They pretend to be crippled or deformed or besmear their bodies with ashes and put on the religious mendicant's robe and go about begging as though they belonged to the class

of professional beggars. Sometimes they are so skilled in the art of deceiving the public that they outdo the professional beggar and earn more than he does.

The Small Trade Beggar.—This may sound even more paradoxical than the last type, for it is hard to believe that anyone engaged in trade, however petty it may be, should find it necessary to beg. Yet it is strangely enough a fact that a number of beggars have made enough money to open up small panbidi, vegetable, flower, grams and puffed-rice shops as side business along with their usual profession of begging. While some members attend to the sales at the shops, others go out begging and each responsible member takes his turn at the shop and at begging by rotation. Perhaps there is no other country in the world where begging has proved so profitable as in India. This type of intelligent beggar makes use of his profits in carrying on small trade as a side line and making greater profits. But most of the professional beggars beg only for begging's sake, and through a peculiar psychological perversity hardly ever spend a penny on themselves. They have never known what it is to buy food or clothing. Both are procured through begging and every pie is accumulated until their death. Thus, they lead a hand-to-mouth, wretched, sordid existence in naked poverty and starvation, and finally die leaving behind them thousands of rupees to become Government property. With them begging is an end in itself. It is not a means of bettering their condition or standard of living as in the case of the employed and small-trade beggar.

The Temporarily Unemployed but Employable Beggar.—Many woes of the working classes spring from irregularity of employment and from their failure in taking the necessary steps in time to undo its bad effects. This causes their energy to become intermittent; their off-days become habitual, and in the wake of indolence, intemperance springs up. Further, with uncertainty of employment comes recklessness about their future. Irregularity of employment, in its turn, is caused by fluctuations in trade, or by the periodic nature of certain occupations, or by illness, misfortune, or some exceptional incapacity. Intemperance

and indolence are also the causes of much that goes by the name of want of work. These causes bring about distress among the working people; and when they do not get work in proper time, gradually they lapse into habitual indigence which forces them ultimately to have recourse to beggary. This type is amenable to social adjustment, and if sent to the native place and set to work on cottage industries at the time of temporary unemployment, may be rescued from lapsing into indigence and beggary. They may also be employed on agricultural projects, road construction and the like as they would only too gladly accept any employment.

The Temporarily Unemployed who are Unemployable.—Unlike the last mentioned type, this type has degenerated to the point of becoming unemployable after a temporary period of unemployment. The low wages, the unskilled nature of the work and its growing irregularity unsettle habits of industry and at last make the men unwilling to accept steady employment. The conditions under which they live and work in industrial towns and cities contribute their share towards the breakdown of self-respect and personal pride. The overcrowding, lack of privacy and absence of nearly all facilities for decent living cannot help exercising a demoralizing influence. Their work is hard, the hours are long and the bosses order them about like so many dumb driven cattle. They then naturally are not concerned about the quality of work done and drift off the job. Gradually there is a decay of honest hard labour and the labourer deteriorates into the regular professional beggar and becomes unemployable.

The Somewhat Permanently Unemployed who are Employable.—This class of unemployed are those who by reason of a change in their trade or in the market, or for some other economic reason find themselves threatened by unemployment, and yet are able and willing to work. If adjustment is not made to some other trade or job many belonging to this class generally become demoralised and degenerate into beggars. If provision for those finding themselves threatened with permanent unemployment can be made promptly and well, before habits of idleness and the

recklessness of discouragement have set in, the danger of breeding confirmed indolence, hopeless apathy and progressive degeneracy will often be safely averted.

The Permanently Unemployed and Unemployable.—This class of the unemployed is permanently out of work because, for one reason or another, they are too inefficient to do any type of work. In other words, to this class belong vagrants who are constantly on the look out for opportunities of obtaining food and lodging without giving work in return. Feeble-mindedness, mental diseases and various personality disorders breed this type of permanently unemployed and unemployable beggars. These include degenerates with eccentricities, epileptics, hysterical types, neurasthenics, persecuted and mystical types, those who regard themselves as apostles and prophets, and those suffering from schizophrenia, or drifting into senility. In a general way these men might be termed weaklings who having no great strength of character, lose their grip on life under the stress of some temporary misfortune. Then having found how easy it is to live without regular work, they lose what little ambition they may have had and merge into the ranks of the unemployed and unemployable.

The Permanently Unemployed who are Viciously and Incorrigibly Unwilling to work.—To this type belong the idle and disorderly persons, rogues and vagabonds. They comprise the semi-criminal, vicious and confirmed idlers who habitually depend on doles and charity, and finally become a danger to the whole community. Hence the necessity of applying genuinely drastic measures to keep them under control. They have reached the lowest rung of the ladder of pauperism as the moral fibre of their personalities has become rotten to the core. No social and economic improvements, no establishment of labour colonies will be of any avail in dealing with this type. The only probable solution would be for the Government to establish Penal Labour Colonies. This does not, by any manner of means, imply that they should be treated like criminals. On the contrary, they need the most sympathetic care and handling. The Penal Colonies should be like psychiatric sanatoria where the treatment



programme should include a balanced plan of work and healthy recreation, and provide for reasonable opportunities for the satisfaction of the most fundamental physical and psychological human needs; for, it is important never to lose sight of the fact that these paupers, however hardened they may appear, are essentially weaklings. Most of them have dwindled into their present plight because they have not had the courage to face and fight the hard battles of life. They have either fled from certain crises in their lives, or because of some misfortune, become hostile to society in general and adopted anti-social ways.

As stated above no attempt has been made to delve into the nature, cause and development of the problem of begging; nor has any solution or constructive scheme for combating the social ill been suggested except as it entered into the discussion of the various types. Nor again, are all the numerous types of beggars that exist in India analysed. Some of the principal types with their sub-types are discussed with a view to acquaint the social worker with the variety of types and with the hope that in the attempt at solution of the beggar problem, a scientific and intensive analysis of the various types will be undertaken; as no intelligent approach can be made to the problem without a proper understanding of this very important aspect.

2

CAUSES OF BEGGARY

> "By far the most frequent cause of beggary is the increasing proportion by which workers displaced from the land cannot find employment or subsistence," writes Dr. Radhakamal Mukerjee. But in addition to this displaced worker, there are the physically handicapped, the blind, the deaf-mutes, etc., who also take to begging. He, therefore, rightly demands that "the root causes be analysed and understood, and that society in India launch forth a programme of prevention rather than amelioration of human inadequacy and suffering as a national concern."

BEGGARY is a symptom of social disorganisation and the widespread custom of alms-giving by individuals and institutions is the method by which the disability, helplessness or social inadequacy of the beggars has been sought to be mitigated in India. Yet this very time-honoured practice of helping the homeless and the helpless has served society to wink at the grave personal and social maladjustments that cause beggary. Modern conscience demands that the root causes be analysed and understood, and that society in India launch forth a programme of prevention rather than amelioration of human inadequacy and suffering as a national concern.

Obviously the most common cause of beggary in India is the loss of agricultural employment in the villages. For several decades the number of landless workers deprived of subsistence from the land has been steadily rising. All landless individuals cannot be absorbed in industrial employment. Driven from the villages into cities and towns, some work as earth-diggers and road-menders or as domestic servants and coolies in the market. Others prefer beggary to work that often brings less income and subsistence. For an Indian every profession or occupation, high or low, develops its inchoate social organisation, resembling some kind of a guild which gives protection to the new beggars, whether able-bodied, disabled or diseased men, women or children.

It is the gang or guild life of the beggars in the big cities and towns of India that makes easy the transition from independent, though precarious, livelihood to pauperism in this country. For the gang or the guild trains persons how and where to beg, acts as a foster-parent to children that are deliberately maimed in order to evoke sympathy of passers-by in the streets, and, generally speaking, looks after their welfare. India has had for centuries this shadowy organisation which has its Sirdars or capitalists and a large number of intermediaries, the ramifications of whose business extend to distant villages and hamlets. They arrange for beggars' accommodation in some slum or tenement and advance them food, cash or dirty clothes from day to day, their wage-earners bringing home every evening the hard day's collection of alms from the different *muhallas* of the city, so that they all have a share in the gains of this organised beggary. It is an underworld about which educated India knows little, a world in which there are cruel exploitation, poignant tragedy and sometimes noble heroism.

By far the most frequent cause of beggary is the increasing proportion by which workers displaced from the land cannot find employment or subsistence. In Bihar alone there are 39.7 lakhs of agricultural workers, the number having increased by 19% between 1921 and 1931. These now constitute 19% of the total agricultural population of the province. Similarly, in the U. P. the agricultural labourers number about 34 lakhs,

an increase of almost 10 lakhs since 1921. All these having lost holdings cannot find a regular employment either in the villages or in the cities and towns to which they migrate. Years of drought or of high prices swell the number of those who starve and beg for food first, it may be, in the villages or near-by towns and then in the distant cities. Calcutta and Bombay are full of migrant beggars. For the beggar often has a free journey by train or steamer or earns as he proceeds by stages. India's traditional method of charity which is enjoined by religion keeps him both alive and mobile.

On the whole, throughout India, the number of beggars comes to a considerable figure, about 14 lakhs, as counted in the census of 1931, half of whom may be estimated to be able-bodied. Recently due to the increase of population, as well as general worsening of the economic situation, the number of beggars must have considerably increased, while due to the latter cause the wells of private charity are drying up. Though rich charitable merchants, land-lords, and shopkeepers still set apart some day or days in the week for alms-giving, an increasing proportion of the beggars has, however, to depend for their food and succour on dharmsālās, chowltries, maqbarās and gurdwārās that still continue to dispense alms and food. A greater proportion of beggars now seen flocking near the bazaars, important shops and streets cannot obtain alms as adequately as before the present economic stress. Yet they ply their trade of eliciting sympathy from householders, shopkeepers and passers-by with a patience born of long endurance and suffering that can be found only among the paupers of the East.

The bulk of the people who are able-bodied and yet are driven to alms-begging are the landless. But the great majority of the beggars in the country are persons who have been disabled by physical or mental deficiency. The blind persons number in India 6,01,370 as compared with 1,14,000 in U.S.A. The blind represent 172 per lakh of population in India as compared with 66 deaf mutes, 42 lepers and 34 insane. The deaf mutes number on the whole 2,30,895 in India as compared with 57,084 in the U.S.A. According to the census the lepers number 1,47,911.

But a more reliable estimate puts down the figure at, at least, a million. The number of insane persons is 98,449. All these are staggering figures given in the census of 1931. In the census of 1941 the defectives have not been counted.

Most such defectives who live in the villages are sooner or later reduced to beggary. The country's economic structure is such that it cannot afford the surplus for maintaining the helpless, nor are there social institutions for amelioration, treatment and constructive work.

Few cities in India maintain statistics of beggars. In 1931 Bombay and Calcutta reported as having as many as 5,025 and 8,266 beggars respectively. Lucknow, we have estimated, has about 2,000 beggars of whom the lepers alone account for 400. A case study of beggars is necessary before we can definitely analyse and classify the unfavourable economic and social situations that give rise to vagrancy and beggary.

Lucknow is the only city in British India that has made beggary an offence punishable by detention in a Poor House established by the Social Service League of the city and recognised for the purpose of detention by its municipality. We have been keeping records of the cases of beggars and truants since the establishment of the Poor House in March, 1941. For nearly 2 years the Poor House was the refuge of the homeless and the helpless who came voluntarily for subsistence and medical care. On 16th March 1943, the first arrests of beggars were made in the city. There was also another round up in April. We, therefore, have data in respect of both voluntary entry and compulsory detention. Out of 38 inmates of the Poor House before detention was enforced, 7 were able-bodied persons. The majority of the inmates were disabled due to blindness, disease, old age and accidents. Since the enforcement of the Act, we have had in all 26 cases out of whom only 4 are able-bodied. In all Indian cities the proportion of able-bodied beggars is of course very much larger. The reason for the small number of able-bodied inmates in the Lucknow Poor House is that the municipal announcement by beat of drum scared and drove away a large number of beggars from the city,

especially the able-bodied ones. The majority of the present inmates are blind, disabled, diseased and feeble-minded. As many as 9 cases exhibit mental defect of some kind or other. The percentage which is 34.5 is rather high and is a matter to be pondered over.

Morons, sexual perverts and emotionally unstable and insane persons form a high proportion of the beggar population in every city in India. The callousness with which modern Indian cities permit insane persons to go about naked and to feed on street garbage is disgraceful. There are also the borderline cases of half normal and half abnormal or subnormal individuals who fail to obtain a satisfactory social adjustment. Some are ugly looking or have suffered from hideous sores that have subjected them to public teasing and bullying from childhood. Rebuffs have driven such frustrated individuals to the underworld where they obtain status. All such individuals show major emotional disturbances that have made them misfits in their families and social situations. Driven out of their old milieu, with its group controls and standards, they drift into a happy-go-lucky, irresponsible life in which work and begging interpolate, with the latter gradually gaining ascendancy. Some become addicts to opium and cocaine in order to stabilize themselves in their vagrancy; others grow sentimental and accept new family responsibilities even as beggars by becoming foster-parents to children picked up from the slums where they live together. All such psychopathic types of beggars demand sympathy, scientific attention and institutional care.

Then there are the incurables, beggars suffering from diseases that will kill them in the long run. Only a few cities in India, like Calcutta and Bombay, have homes for the incurables. Most Indian cities permit the incurables, who are either refused admission to a hospital or are expelled by it, to die on the streets like dogs. The incurables form not a negligible proportion of the beggar population in every town who drag on a life of agony and disseminate disease.

Among the beggar inmates it is found that the blind fraternize, aiding one another in their daily rounds and pooling their

resources. I have also found the blind marrying each other and their daughter who is feeble-minded being again married to a blind person. This perpetuates beggary as a profession. An old blind woman's daughter who earns as a maid servant in some one's household and wears a silver neck-piece appeared before the Revision Board for release of her mother, promising us that she would be supported by her work and not beg. Thus the Lucknow Act has served to restore family affection and unity even among the submerged classes. Family breakdown or quarrel among the parents has led to the truancy of boys some of whom have become our inmates. Desertion by the husband is also a cause of beggary of women when immorality fails to give them subsistence. Many beggars are engaged in petty theft or in a nefarious traffic in girls. Some inmates have on medical examination been found to suffer from venereal diseases. Among the beggars who have been arrested, we have found that their earnings average only 4 as. per diem. The largest amount found in possession with them is Rs. 2-14-0. Thus the city of Lucknow was spending on an average Rs. 500/- a day for the support of its beggar population. One of them is an opium addict for whom the Poor House has to provide every day.

The most difficult of the beggar cases are, of course, the lepers. Leprosy, with its accompanying disablement, disfigurement and social opprobrium, is one of the principal causes of beggary in India and is at the same time the most difficult to handle. Many lepers roam about markets, cinemas and theatres infecting innocent passers-by. Others are burnt-out, but it is both risky and unpopular to keep the leper-beggars in the same house of detention. The Lucknow Poor House is taking steps to provide special accommodation for them.

There is another class of beggars upon whom beggary is enforced. These are orphans and waifs and strays who are sometimes deliberately maimed or disfigured in order that their guardians, the beggars, may earn their living. In the world of beggars children are mortgaged and sold in broad day-light. The more horrid and the more pathetic looking the child, the greater is its price. And if it fails to attract the passers-by

by its piteous cries it is tortured into more successful imploring and begging by their step-parents. Many normal parents also trade on their children's natural infirmities using these as sources of supplementary income. And who would take to beggary as the normal occupation with greater ease and alacrity than the children of the beggars, normal and bright or hereditarily tainted, diseased and stunted specimens of humanity? Nothing short of a Children's Act can protect such children and remove them from the streets. Finally, there are the religious beggars whose numbers are legion and who would yet for some time defy detention or institutional care and treatment.

As there are different causes and situations of beggary, the institutional treatment has to be adjusted to the different categories of beggars. Thus the Poor House of a big city should have an Infirmary for the decrepit, disabled and diseased and others suffering from non-infectious diseases. It should have a section for lepers and other beggars suffering from infectious or contagious diseases. It should also have a department for the child beggars who must be taught to read and write and become self-supporting. And finally, there should be a workhouse or an agricultural colony for the able-bodied ne'er-do-wells who live by lying and black-mailing, whose example discourages all poor honest workers and who must be taught a new dignity and means of livelihood.

Unremunerative agriculture, poverty, unemployment and disruption of joint family and of caste control are the major causes of increase of beggary in India. India neglects 6,00,000 of her blind, 2,50,000 of her deaf and dumb, 1,00,000 of her insane and 10,00,000 of her lepers. At the same time she permits them to multiply without any law of sterilization of the hereditarily unfit and tainted. Private charity can no longer be left to deal spasmodically and without understanding the colossal problems of the homeless, the helpless and the hopeless in society. Nor should the State be chary today in accepting the obligations of social service through its own departments. For spontaneous private charity and compassion which the ancient religion and social code inculcate can no longer be relied upon for grappling

with a mass phenomenon. Nor can the individual undertake to accomplish what institutions alone can do in respect of both amelioration and prevention of human inadequacy and suffering. To neglect the calls of organised philanthropy and institutional treatment is to make human life which is already so cheap in India yet cheaper, so that it will spill more lavishly and destructively on all sides, transforming the Indian town-dweller into a more hard-hearted and cynical creature than he is today.

3

MENTAL TRAITS OF BEGGARS

In this chapter Dr. Sen Gupta analyses the psychological make-up of the beggar-personality, and deals with the various techniques and motivations behind the begging appeal. He maintains that the three basic tendencies that go to mould the beggar personality are masochism, a dependent attitude and persistence of certain childhood tendencies. The writer concludes that these factors and the fact that the beggar's attention is bound to be unstable under the double stress of variable emotion and the ever-variable association render the beggar-personality unstable for any kind of adaptation, social and economic.

THE *Begging Appeal.*—The beggar banks upon the sentiments inherent in human nature. He subsists in an organised economic society inasmuch as his appeals elicit a sympathetic response from his fellowmen. Such sympathy, however, does not always rest on the other regarding propensities of which the moral philosopher speaks. The beggar's appeal often compels response mainly through its action on one or the other of the basic self-regarding motives. It succeeds for the reason that man proposes to purchase virtue and spiritual reward, *Puṇya*, in exchange for a few coppers. Many believe that even the

good things of earthly life may be secured through the grace of God granted to those who render aid to the " down and out ". Even a casual observation of the plaintive appeal that beggars send forth would bear out the truth of these propositions.

It is, however, true that the beggar often appeals directly to man's compassion, to his ' tender emotions ' and to his sense of protectiveness. The cultivation of such sentiments has been approved by almost all classes of religion. The subjective processes that the begging appeal elicits are thus sanctified by religious doctrine and moral code. But behind all of these is the motive of securing social health, the impulse of the individual to cover up the ugly sore that social and perhaps biological maladjustment produce.

The beggar thus attempts to touch the personality at all its vulnerable points. He appeals to your religious sentiments, to your sense of dependence on Divine grace when he shouts " May God give you happiness" (Tumko parmātmā sukhī rakhey, bābā); he appeals to you as a parent when he blesses your children (Tumhārā bal bachchā sukhī rahey); he appeals to your sense of greed when untold wealth and even a kingdom is promised to you in exchange for a pice, and seeks your protection for himself and his starving family; and finally he tells you of his illness, hard luck, bereavement and utter destitution. The begging appeal traverses the entire region of motives from the lofty theological sentiments to contemptuous pity of the superior for the inferior, from greed for spiritual bliss to greed for material and social success, from love of one's own children to the desire for avoidance of an ugly sight. Success of beggary, therefore, presupposes a high degree of emotional naīvetè and some surplus cash among people in general. It presupposes several other motives—a desire to avoid the sight of pain and suffering, a belief in sympathetic magic, a desire to get something at a low cost and a sense of superiority. A simple question ' Why do you give money to a street beggar ? ' brought out the following replies :—

Answers.	*No. of persons.*
I may be in the same position	8
I feel distressed	5
They deserve something for their good wishes ...	2
Somebody must look after them	6
It is enjoined by religion	1
One must look beyond one's own needs	2
I felt like giving something	1
No particular reason	1
Total	26

The Psycho-physical Technique of the Appeal.—An attempt to beg in order to be effective, must (1) attract attention, (2) appeal to emotion, (3) impress the need of the beggar upon the mind of his patrons. The beggar utilises three types of technique in his appeals. I shall describe these under three headings: the variable technique, the stereotypes and the situation.

The Variable Techniques.—The meaning conveyed by begging appeal may be rendered more effective with the aid of certain subsidiary factors. The same hard-luck tale brings more coppers when it is associated with occasional sobs and sighs than when it is a continuous whine. The successful beggar must be a good actor; he must vary his speech and demeanour with the normal procession of changes that characterise mental life. Thus intonation, facial expressions and general bodily posture must undergo alteration as they do for people in grief and agony. These transform the meaning that the beggar seeks to convey in his appeal and render the latter pointedly personal to each passer-by just as the actor makes the members of his audience feel that his elocution carries a personal message to each. A turning of the eyes, a slight shift in posture, slight rise and fall of pitch of the voice and the lines of long-dead Shakespeare come to life.

The Stereotypes.—The same thing is true of begging appeals. The old tales heard in childhood, the precepts transmitted from

the early days of society, the myths of fairies, gods and demons that assume queer human shapes—all stir in our breast when we listen and yield to the beggar's plaintive wails. The actor fails when his voice gives an impression of hard memory-work; the beggar fails when he takes recourse to *stereotypes* of voice and intonation, of gesture and facial contortions, of bodily posture and movement.

There is always a temptation for the beggar to take to stereotypes. Lodged on the wayside the beggar sees the stream of humanity pass by in a never-ending succession. He scans a face here and there only to meet with a blank look of dismal unconcern. He does not wish them to return; each face passes on even as the wavelets in the stream pass on never to return. It is not necessary for the beggar, therefore, to try to variegate his voice and gesture; they fall on new ears, new eyes and new minds. To render the begging appeal into stereotypes is to economise energy. I purchased for a two-anna piece the confidence of a familiar figure on the Lucknow foot-path: "Who cares for how we ask! You, the lucky ones, don't give us money because you feel for us. You give us a pice or two because God prompts you and because you don't miss what you give". A strain of disdainful fatalism may be discerned almost directly behind the voice that begs.

The Situation.—Yet the beggar is not slow to seize upon special occasions and geographical situations. Once I followed a particular beggar from temple to temple at Benares. He was never loth to sing to the praise of the presiding deity. The same person who seemed to be a devout *Vaishnava* in front of one temple was transformed into a *Shākta* before another. One other embarrassing trick of some of the knights of the begging bowl is to pose as victims of starvation and disease just in front of sweet-meat shops and small hotels. Those who feel the gnawing of hunger are bound to relent to others from sheer fellow-feeling. One of these persons could form almost a bowl of his belly stopping down and making an arch of the entire abdominal cavity. This was intended to show that his system was entirely empty of food. A rapid flow of words, a keen perception of the situation,

certain forms of physical posture, like the one described above, and also certain common *yogic* postures make specialists of common beggars. Skill in the use of the psycho-physical techniques of intonation and pitch variation, emotional expressions, facial contortions, bodily postures, the ability to match the flow of words with situations, and finally, quickness in the perception of the possibilities of an environment enter into calculation in making a success of begging.

The Personality of City Beggars.—The personality of the beggar, his temper, outlook and technique change from place to place. The city beggar has his own beat, own clients and probably also his house. He solicits a variety of patrons and must win success in keen competition. He must, therefore, be a person of somewhat higher intellectual powers. He must be able to direct all the weapons in his armoury to the vulnerable spots of his patron's personality. For instance, a beggar at a religious centre or on religious occasions must be able to give a religious touch to his garb and his ideology. He must also stress the relation between giving charity and the particular religious festival. I have heard beggars make references to obscure incidents mentioned in the *Puranas* in order to stress the value of charity on the particular occasion. Another festival, another scene and an entirely new personality emerges.

There are certain places which through tradition have bred a specific type of beggar-personality. I have particularly in my mind the district of Nadia, near the place where Chaitanya Deva was born, which naturally perpetuates the tradition of beggary as a road to holiness. The beggars of the district are thus the most impertinent in the whole of Northern India. They are aggressive and often assume a threatening attitude on meeting with refusal.

These descriptions are intended to show that the outward forms of the beggar-personality carry the impress of the city and the village, of traditions and economic settings of life. These are surface-characters that appear on the background of a durable personality-type the nature of which I propose to consider here. We have seen in the preceding sections that there is one or the

other of the five principal *motifs* in the begging appeals, namely, (1) Religious sanctification, (2) *Punya* or moral merit-making for better fate in the next world, (3) Blessings in the present life, (4) Compassion and (5) Personal responsibility for making provision for the helpless. These motives are combined into various forms of appeal which beggar personalities of different types employ. We shall describe these personalities as A, B, C, D and E type.

To the *A-type* belongs the personality of the religious mendicant who stresses the giving of alms as a religious duty. The beggar is doing you a favour by giving you an opportunity of doing your duty. He is not asking a favour of you. This motive is usually strengthened by a promise of blessings that your act of charity will secure for you even in your present life. It makes for a personality characterised by both intelligence and vigour.

To the *B-type* belong those who stress mainly the promise of earthly gains and moral merit in the next world in exchange for charity. The personality is characterised by intelligence, though apologetic in its general tone.

The *C-type* of personality employs the technique of the B-type but it stresses the factor of compassion. It appeals to the softer side of your nature, to your sympathy and protectiveness. It presents the profile of a helpless and yet clever personality.

The *D-type* appeals to compassion and expresses its *utter dependence* upon you for provision. It seemingly shows a picture of helplessness, utter misery due to poverty, starvation and disease. The feeling of utter dependence marks it out from the two preceding types.

The *E-type* is a personality which is actually helpless, the cripple, the blind, the paralysed and the leper. People in this group sometimes mumble out their appeal. More often they are silent. The physical picture is enough to convince anyone of their needs. They are often used by cleverer persons for collecting charities very little of which is used for the maintenance of these unfortunates. All of these types are found in a

flourishing city and require different types of treatment and social provision.

The Psychological Make-up of City Beggars.—We have attempted, in the previous part of our discussion, to derive the general conception of the beggar-personality from the appeals that are made and from the nature of the motives that the supplicant attempts to stimulate in his patron. It is also possible to deduce certain conclusions in regard to the basic mental constitution of these individuals. The more solvent members of beggars' profession possess certain characters in common with the confidence-trick men and actors. The more intelligent persons stand in fact midway between these two classes with respect to their mental constitution.

Seen from the perspective of psychology many of the beggars are quick-change artists. Their voices change from a high pitched moan to almost a whining sigh; their ideas change from heavenly bliss which they offer you to thoughts of a few coppers which they are willing to receive; and their sentiments descend from the altitude of high benediction to low-level supplication. These are signs of great plasticity of emotions, of a large range within which they may change in quality and intensity alike. Such emotional fluctuation in its turn is bound to influence the course of ideas. For, each emotional set releases attitudes and ideas of a particular order.

It is not surprising to find, therefore, that beggars of the upper class can react to each occasion and even each group of persons with a specified set of ideas. For each external environment appeals primarily to the emotional instinctive side and the emotional set, and brings the relevant word-associations to bear upon the situation. This phenomenon is sometimes appraised as intelligence; in reality it exhibits merely a highly developed capacity of association. It represents the character of the 'con' man, the demagogue and the upper class beggar. I had an opportunity to test the capacity of association of a boy of 17 who is an intelligent-looking youngster living mainly by beggary in the bazaar. The following results were obtained when certain situations were suggested. The number of associations is

compared to those of an average High School boy of the same age-group. The beggar is called A and the school boy B. Time given was 3 minutes for each item :—

Imaginary situation ...	A			B		
	Abstract virtues	Emotionally toned words	Entreaties and supplication	Abstract virtues	Emotionally toned words	Entreaties and supplication
Before a temple	17	13	9	5	4	2
Bathing ghat ...	22	9	11	6(?)	2	3
Bazaar ...	31	17	8	0	5	2
Before a house of festivity ...	24	14	10	11	8	3

Each imaginary situation was suggested and the boys, one after the other, were asked to beg a few coppers of imaginary patrons wishing them well, appealing to their pity and addressing words of entreaty and supplication. The beggar beat the school boy hollow as he was used to this art, while the school boy was merely straining his imagination.

A similar phenomenon was observed in the case of three beggar boys who beg on the public thoroughfare of a large city. Each was promised that twice the amount found on each would be given if they participated in a 'game'. Each taken apart from the other was asked to whine out his appeal which was all the time being taken down. Roughly speaking, the boy who had earned most was found to be able to give a much longer chain of word-associations before he stopped for breath. I am also of opinion that the successful beggar exhibits a maximal degree of expressive changes, facial and gestural, in the course of begging. This would be in consonance with the hypothesis that at the root of successful begging lies a highly plastic emotional temperament. Emotion prompts ideas on the one hand, and the expressive changes on the other. This would also be in keeping with the view that the beggar in his mental make-up

is an adept at impersonation. He can vary his emotional set of words and expressions to suit the changing external conditions, and can lend shape to his thoughts in long chains of associations and to his passing sentiments in the expressive changes.

We may deduce from the analysis that the beggar possesses a certain degree of intelligence which expresses itself in association. He does not show a capacity of abstract reasoning nor of thinking out problems but of sizing up a situation in terms of a chain of past experiences. We may say that the beggar, in this sense, exhibits an order of intelligence which is slowly but surely superseded by growth, culture, social life and economic adjustment.

We may also conclude that the beggar exhibits a certain deficiency in durable *emotional-ideational-motor orientation* to the situations that daily life precipitates. Our mind lays its firm grasp on a situation when emotions, ideas and action-attitudes are all directed to it. The passing scenes are thus 'fixed' like a photographic print for present and future use. If emotions by shifting the ideas and action-attitudes fail in their grasp, perceptions do not leave a precipitate for future use. The normal co-ordination of emotions, ideas and action does not endure largely because of a high degree of plasticity of emotions. Such want of co-ordination again drags down the personality below the level at which adjustment may be effective.

It is possible to think of several steps below the plane at which social and economic failure occurs. The initiative exhibited by the more successful beggar may diminish; the appeals, their expressions in words and gesture, may become stereotyped. The words may eternally repeat themselves, throwing the beggar's mind into a haze and rendering his picturesque language into a sorry drone. People cease to note and fewer coppers are thrown into the bowl. We can further think of the beggar as a whining machine which is no longer capable of soliciting favours. People give only for avoiding irritation and unpleasantness. The lesser the mental plasticity and variability of behaviour, the lower is the income from begging. Mental plasticity, variability of behaviour, and at the same time the development

of certain durable patterns of behaviour, indicate successful adjustment and intelligence. The low-grade beggar represents a failure in both of these directions.

Evaluation of the Mental Status.—It is a persistent belief in the mind of virtuous people that confirmed beggars may be reclaimed for normal economic life. The idea is false in a great number of cases. The beggar, as we have seen, most often possesses an order of intelligence that expresses itself in the form of association. The processes of thinking cannot cut through the wall of associative experience and its verbal expression. Whatever alters the course of association also modifies the course of thinking. The driving power behind a chain of association, as the free association method of the psycho-analyst has shown, is emotion. Hence, the intellectual life of a beggar is a weather-cock driven by emotion.

The beggar, however, cultivates a whole series of emotions each quality playing its brief role and ushering in a new chain of ideas. Hence, attention is bound to be unstable under the double stress of variable emotion and the ever-variable association. These factors render the personality unstable for any kind of durable adaptation, social and economic. Underlying these and imparting the particular shape that the beggar-personality assumes, are three deep and basic tendencies, namely, *masochism*, *a dependent attitude* and *persistence of certain childhood tendencies.* I shall briefly consider each of these.

Masochism is the trait that makes it pleasurable for a person to suffer a certain degree of physical pain. The definition may sound like a paradox but it represents nevertheless a fundamental trait of the self. We are all more or less sadists and masochists. The border line of normal life is crossed when the balance of the two is disturbed and one predominates to an unusual degree. The perpetual hard-luck story, the whine and the sob which constitute the stock-in-trade of the beggar are expressions of deep-lying *masochism.* A true sadist would not be a beggar; he would be a robber if physically competent. The persistence in the profession so humiliating is often due to an enduring and dominant masochistic strain.

Secondly, there are certain persons who are always *dependent* on some one else. It may, perhaps, be due to the manner of bringing up of the child or due to the social status of the family. It may be, in other words, an induced character. So far as the individual is concerned the trait is durable. Such sense of dependence translates men into perpetual dependents and therefore into beggars. The experiment has yet to be tried whether the child beggar could be purged of his sense of dependence. But if we cannot remove the other traits that go to build up the beggar-personality we may change him into a thief or a robber. The experiment, however, is worth trying.

The third factor that weaves all mental functions into the beggar-personality is the *persistence of childhood traits.* This may be due to the manner of bringing up, early illness or a permanent disability. It keeps one part of the mind permanently on the childhood level. That is why the beggar always assumes in his appeals the attitude and terminology, and at time even the lisping of the child. I have observed in Lucknow at least six clear instances of such lisping. This part of the mind that forgets to grow up keeps the adult tied to the apron-strings of an imaginary parent. The appeal that the beggar sends forth is always to this parent-personality which is invested in whoever may come to assistance.

The beggar-personality is thus born of certain persistent mental factors. These twist all the mental functions into a new type of personality—a personality that finds pleasure in pain is always dependent and childlike. Naturally enough it would fail in economic adjustment from the very beginning. Absence of institutions that may correct these disorders accentuates these weaknesses, The individual gradually turns into a sub-economic and sub-social creature.

General Conclusion.—Biologists speak of vestigeal remains that hark back to the remote past. The appendix is normally harmless; it may, however, assume a pathological form. The beggar represents vestigeal remains of the social past. He carries his intelligence very often to the plane in which men had to recall the entire past through association in order to discover

a little hint for new adaptation. The tendency appears in childhood where thought pursues the tortuous route of associative connections. It appears again in dotage when men bore their fellow-beings with long drawn out tales of other days. Several of the primitive peoples are said to dwell on this mental plane. The beggar seems to represent a case of mental atavism; his is a personality that fits in better with the less differentiated tribal scheme in which all may claim a share for sustenance.

The beggar is a throw-back to childhood in his sense of dependence and in his child-parent attitude towards his patrons; he thinks like a child and feels like a child. He often employs all the obvious tricks of the child bent on getting something out of the parent. He represents an immature personality also in his sentiments. He is emotionally naive and labours under the delusion that his own subjective states must necessarily infect others. He has stopped short in the process of mental growth.

The beggar represents the persistence of childhood trends in another respect. He has a profound belief in sympathetic magic. He believes that his curses and blessings must in the long run prove effective. This is not a pose. I have had conversation with more than a dozen of beggars on this point. They believe sincerely in the idea. This again represents a mental throw-back. The beggar in the matter of his social adaptation represents an early social order. He belongs to the community and comes forward wherever there is a gathering of the community; he has an imperfectly developed sense of self-hood. The response made by his fellow-beings also represents certain native mental attitudes, the attitude of the benevolent father, the sentiment of the mother towards a child that persists in its demands, the attitude of the strong towards the weak.

These sentiments and outlooks yield personal satisfaction. Do they solve the beggar problem? It is necessary to reclaim the child beggar so that he outgrows the mental plane that ties him to the city bazaar and pavement. It is necessary to reclaim the adult from exhibiting his sense of dependence and his masochism. The task of society does not end in offering the

needed relief alone. It must prevent the mental infection from spreading and affecting the growing children and the borderland personality. For nothing spreads so insidiously as mental infection conveyed by words and gestures. The end may be achieved only by a provision of institutions that offer to the beggar the environment that he needs and the treatment that may keep both him and society in healthy isolation from each other.

4

BEGGARS—A MENACE TO PUBLIC HEALTH

Dr. B. C. Das Gupta deals with the main types of diseased beggars and shows how they serve as foci of infection to those that come close enough for contact. This social evil, he fears, has assumed epidemic proportions in some places from the public health point of view. In a thought-provoking manner he traces, though briefly, the main features of the beggar problem as bearing on public health.

IN big cities, at fairs and festivals in India, where large congregations of people occur, nay, even in some villages, it is a common sight to notice armies of beggars and loafers of all ages and sexes seeking alms and charities from people. Begging is not always a question of poverty nor is it altogether a matter of a lucrative and easy-going profession resorted to by malingerers and able-bodied but lazy men and women. It constitutes a very complex social problem at the root of which can be traced a multitude of causes that conspire to produce this remarkable individual "the Beggar". It is also intimately related with other social problems such as intemperance, unemployment, poverty, crippling diseases, leprosy, lack of provision for old age, etc., so that its solution requires a good deal of thought and care on the part of the social students and reformers.

Furthermore, in a country like ours, where religions sanction the formation of mendicant orders and also prescribe charity and sympathy for mankind for one's own elevation, the problem of beggary assumes greater complications.

Sentiments of charity are not, however, peculiar to India alone. In the Western countries too it has been urged by eminent writers that in giving alms enquiry as to the necessity of the person helped should not enter into one's mind. God does not look so much upon the merits of the man who requires the help as into the manner of him that gives, and if the man does not deserve it, the gift has been made to humanity. Again, another eminent English author advises that if an outwardly and visibly poor creature comes to you for alms do not stay to enquire if the facts of the case are true, if those in whose name he implores the help have a real existence or not. It is good to believe him. Shakespeare, the immortal poet, has sung of mercy in a tone of matchless beauty in the English language:

> "The quality of mercy is not strained;
> It droppeth like gentle rain from Heaven;
> It is twice blessed:
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

Thus at all times in human history the sentiment of sympathy and charity has played a prominent part in the social composition of both the individual and the community alike. Even so it is today. Whether in all instances it "blesseth him that gives and him that takes", man has not bothered to pause and ponder. Hence, much of the beggar problem that subsists on such sentiments continues to exist and thrive.

Whether the root cause is economic, social or religious, or a combination of all of them it is not our object here to discuss. Neither is it our purpose to assess their proportionate importance in the creation of the problem. The immediate object is to view this social evil which in some places, it is feared, has assumed epidemic proportions from the public health point of view. But in all investigations of health problems the causative factors and their peculiarities determine to a great extent the

magnitude, the possibilities of their growth and expansion and finally the lines of prevention. Therefore, in discussing the epidemiology of the beggar problem—if I may coin the phrase—it is but necessary that we should touch, though lightly, upon the types of beggars and their pathogenesis and then consider their full bearing and effects upon the public health of the country.

The beggars met with in cities or in pilgrim centres may be classified mainly under the following heads:—(1) The destitute, (2) the homeless aged, (3) the crippled, the maimed, the blind, etc., (4) religious mendicants, (5) the lepers and the diseased persons suffering from infectious diseases, with sores and ulcers covered with plasters on which myriads of flies settle and feed; (6) children trained by organised bodies or by unscrupulous parents into the profession of begging, (7) able-bodied but lazy people who roam about in the cities, beg by day, and turn into thieves and robbers by night and become a menace to society, and finally, (8) professional orphans.

It is not possible to go into the question of determining the extent to which each of the above categories constitutes a definite menace to the public health of the locality where it is found. It can be stated without fear of contradiction that one of the main reasons why these beggars appear intolerable and obnoxious is that they are a serious nuisance to the people whom they pester with persistence for alms in the streets, at the railway stations and at all places where people collect.

It is undoubtedly annoying to be bothered by beggars when you are in a hurry to catch a train, tram or bus, when your mind is occupied with serious matters of business or work, to be followed for miles by urchins with dirty bodies and clothes when you are out for a walk in fresh air. If this aspect of the beggar problem could be mitigated, if begging in public streets could be reduced, the nuisance, even though it would remain in its fundamental aspects, would not be so intolerable.

As mentioned above the beggar nuisance is more localised in big cities, in railway stations and in the pilgrim centres. It is not uncommon to find, especially when travelling in the third class railway compartments, beggars with loathsome deformities

and infectious diseases crawling out of the space below the seats when the train is in motion and all the danger of being put out is over. They travel without tickets by night and hide themselves when the train halts at big stations lest they be found out by the checkers and forced out of the compartment. Sometimes even when detected, the usual sympathy of the checker and also of some passengers stands him in good stead and the journey is continued without trouble. In most instances of beggars with loathsome diseases, this is the usual way they enter into a city, where for want of adequate law or lax working of it such as it exists, they settle down in this profession of begging with impunity. The larger the city and the population, and more numerous the industries, the larger will be the strength of beggars.

Let us now consider the problem of beggars as a whole and see in what manner they form a menace to the public health of the locality.

The majority of beggars live on slender means, and more often are without a home. The foot-paths of the city of Bombay will bear witness to this fact. A considerable amount of over-crowding in rooms in certain sections of the city is due to a large number of beggars sharing one room just for the shelter at night, particularly in the monsoon. When foot-paths and open spaces serve as shelters and sleeping places, the filthy condition created through absence of sanitary facilities can be better imagined than described. Diseases of the intestines become rampant and they spread without check to others in the same locality through flies. In spite of the fact that many of them live in open air, if a random survey were made of the beggars of all ages, it would not be surprising if a large percentage were found suffering from all stages of tuberculosis due to malnutrition and insanitary living conditions. These beggars in turn become definite mobile sources of tuberculosis in the city and disseminate the disease by indiscriminate spitting. Unlike an ordinary house-holder, they do not seek hospital treatment as confinement in an institution for any length of time would deprive them of the freedom of the trade. Moreover, the possibility of invoking

charitable consideration on the strength of such physical illness is greater and hence the usual tendency on their part to make use of the chronic illness for securing larger alms. While this goes on, the danger to the public increases every day. Overcrowding, be it on foot-paths or in sheltered houses, leads to the spreading of various infections and often to low moral life ending in venereal diseases. Not infrequently cases come to the city-clinics for treatment of venereal diseases contacted from the professional beggars. This particularly applies to the able-bodied beggars who have not the remotest excuse for begging.

It is a common experience of the city health authorities to find epidemic diseases among the road-side cases who, till they are removed to hospital, serve as foci of infection to those that come close enough for contact. In the early stage of some diseases, when the signs are not too obvious on him and the beggar is on his feet plying his trade, he is a veritable source of infection to those whom he approaches for alms. Cases of measles, chicken-pox, and small-pox have often occurred in this manner.

I have already referred to the travel of diseased beggars by railroad. Infection from such beggars may not only spread to the fellow-passengers, but the possibilities of infection being imported from one locality into another through them, are great. These beggars acquire an infection at a fair or pilgrim centre and transmit it to a fresh locality hitherto untouched by the disease.

Old age is not an unmitigated blessing, but often from the point of view of the community, a serious social question. If there is no community programme aiming at safeguarding and protecting old age, it may lead to begging, examples of which are quite common in the cities. Although old age in beggars by itself constitutes no danger, this is a period of life when diseases of public health importance get a strong foot-hold in the individual and thus assume serious proportions. Cancer is a disease of old age and not infrequently one comes across beggars with cancerous ulcers and sores seated in a crowded place imploring alms from passers-by. In a like manner, infective sores and ulcers,

an exhibition of which is often made in the hope of exciting sympathetic response from the public, are, apart from the question of their disgusting sight, definitely risky to public health. Aside from the danger of infection the sight of these loathsome diseases often produces a definitely detrimental psychic effect upon the mind and not infrequently causes neurosis and anorexia.

I have already referred to the insanitary living conditions of the beggars in general. Insanitary conditions lead to verminous state and ailments such as scabies, lousiness, relapsing fevers amongst the beggars, particularly in beggar children. In these days of war and rapid communications with different parts of the world, lousiness may lead to a very serious disease called typhus. When these beggars keep pestering the public for gifts and alms the danger of such infection being communicated to the public —a cruel return for the kindness shown—is indeed great. Owing to insanitary conditions and habits of living, the gypsies and other nomadic tribes that often come in numbers to the cities for the greater part of the year and live by begging form endemic foci of diseases and sources of danger to the locality where they settle down in large colonies.

Lepers whom the public loathe the most to see in streets and at street-corners, form into groups of beggars. They throng in numbers in all seasons and at all crowded places. They form a problem by themselves, both from the point of view of health and of the profession of begging. I shall refer to them separately later.

The crippled, the maimed and the blind are a class of beggars who have no special public health significance, excepting a general nuisance owing to their insanitary conditions and habits of living; they cannot be called dangerous. In this connection, it may not be out of place to mention the acts of cruelty often perpetrated on children brought up by organised begging. These children are rendered blind by application of drugs and intentional injury to the eye so as to be a richer source of income to their masters. In a like manner, the crippled children arouse greater sympathy and cases are reported where children have been crippled intentionally by injury to their bones for this purpose.

There is another category of beggars who owing to congenital defects are mentally deficient and destitute. They present among others a problem of special public health significance. In many instances these poor creatures are used for purposes of immorality and sexual perversions. In the case of a normal child-beggar sexual perversion is sometimes committed under duress and at other times as willing partners. In the case of the mentally deficient, the practice of men and women frequenting institutions endangering child morals, is to make use of the young boys and girls for the furtherance of their purpose. The ultimate result of all this is to disseminate venereal diseases which in many instances go untreated owing to the fact that these mentally deficient children hardly realise the effect of the diseases on them, much less the necessity for treatment and cure. The effect of venereal disease not only on the individual but also on his progeny is too well known to require recapitulation. They in their turn not only cause other diseases, high infant death rate, but produce a generation of weak, mentally deficient and blind children, thus completing the perfectly vicious circle of aiding the cause of beggary and the swelling number of beggars.

We have so far attempted to indicate the general and special manner in which the beggars of different types disseminate diseases and constitute a nuisance and a danger to the public. We have not estimated the economic loss to the community arising from supporting able-bodied, lazy adults and child beggars on charity. To me, it is a waste of national wealth to keep them perpetually as dependent individuals. Even if it is not a loss of national wealth, it cannot be denied that they are a definite danger to national health.

The religious mendicants are met with more frequently at centres of pilgrimage and near the temples ; they are not a common sight in the streets of the cities. The annoyance and inconvenience caused by such beggars to the general public is, therefore, much less in proportion to that caused by street beggars of the types described above.

The truly religious mendicant is seldom, if ever, a nuisance and the chances of contracting diseases from him are extremely

remote and rare. These mendicants are a class whose religions have prompted them to renounce the world and to live on alms just sufficient for a daily meal and no more. They possess nothing but the will to serve God and find Him. The spurious mendicant, however, is one who possesses, inspite of the apparent renunciation of the world as manifested by his garb, powerful instincts of possession and accumulation. He goes on begging without end and it is he who is a source of annoyance and inconvenience so often met with at the pilgrim centres. Fortunately, this type is generally localised round these places of worship and hence is not as acute a problem as the city beggar. As long as individual and indiscriminate alms-giving continues, these will remain a problem. A number of this class, homeless as they are, live in insanitary surroundings and owing to dirty habits of living are a source of danger to public health as other types of beggars.

An orphan enlists sympathy of the public, particularly of the family man, much more quickly and easily than any other child beggar. The appeal is even more effective when the orphan can relate pathetic stories of neglect and cruelty or of death of parents under tragic circumstances. Immediately the hearts are touched and the purse strings are loosened. This fact is often taken advantage of by some unscrupulous managers of the so-called orphanages in the outlying districts. They bring stray children into the city, train them to pose as orphans and to beg for funds for their institutions. If attempts were seriously made to trace the existence of these institutions, in many instances they would end in fruitless search. It has indeed become a profession with them and a profitable one at that. These so-called orphan beggars usually visit homes, institutions, railway stations and trains. They are not usually seen begging in streets and, therefore, are not as obnoxious a pest as the ordinary street beggar. These children generally come from distant villages or small towns and are let loose in the cities where diseases of different nature are endemic. Their sojourn in the city is made under difficult conditions—at as little expense as possible. In their attempt to save and surrender to their inexorable masters



Mela—The Beggars' Paradise.



A Mendicant



OUR SADHUS

Hale and hearty, under the garb of relig'ous dedication, find life easy-going. They go from door to door, singing religious songs and accepting anything, cash, eatables or clothing.

almost the whole amount collected by begging, these children suffer a good deal for want of proper food and shelter. The inevitable result is that they become susceptible to the city diseases and fall a prey to them. When finally they go back to the villages, it is generally with money but minus their health. If the disease acquired is infectious, they become fresh foci of infection and spread it to others.

Leprosy is one of the most dreaded diseases in India. Hence leper beggars are the most objectionable to the general public. But in order to understand the causation of this problem of beggars with leprosy, it is necessary to view the subject from different angles and it is only then that the enormity of its social and public health significance, as also of the difficulties in remedying the evil, can be accurately measured.

The association of leprosy with the profession of begging is very ancient. For many centuries wandering beggars with leprosy have visited centres of pilgrimage and large cities. In recent years, with the development and industrialisation of our cities, the problem of beggars with leprosy has attained very large proportions. It is very acute in cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. In Calcutta they generally live in *bustees* and quarters entirely occupied by them and the business of begging is well organised under a headman. In addition to receiving help in the form of money, the lepers are sometimes fed in large numbers at certain centres by philanthropic and religious organisations. Fortunately, however, the danger to the general public is minimised to a great extent by their segregation. In other cities where such is not the case, they are scattered throughout the city and thereby increase the danger. In Bombay there is a Leper Asylum (Acworth Leper Home), but even at its best it can only accommodate a fraction of the actual number that should be isolated. Forced isolation has proved a failure as is seen from the fact that the lepers abscond in numbers. Even if they could be kept by force upto the fullest capacity of the institution or even more, their places in the streets would be taken up by new-comers from the provinces and the problem of leper beggars on the streets will continue as ever.

In Bombay 80% of the lepers committed to the Acworth Leper Home by the Magistrates belong to areas outside the city and very often outside the province as well. Attempts were therefore made to place upon the districts and provinces the financial burden of segregation, but that too has failed to prevent the migration of beggar lepers into the city. In the absence of a co-ordinated and co-operative policy of leprosy control on the part of the various provinces, of registration of leper beggars in different parts of India, of rigid restrictions in travel, of a genuine desire for diverting individual charity into community chests, of an effective public opinion against congregation of these people in cities and public places and against indiscriminate alms-giving, the stream of beggars from smaller places to bigger ones will flow on for ever.

If we were to assess fully the damage to public health caused by the leper beggars, it is necessary to appreciate the various conditions that influence the incidence of leprosy, the attitude of the public towards the disease and the social status of the people suffering from it. Leprosy is a social problem and socio-economic factors such as poverty, bad housing, poor nutrition and debilitating diseases have both predisposing and aggravating effects upon the individual, although it is difficult to form an exact quantitative, estimate of the part played by each one of them.

In ancient Indian writings the attitude of the people toward the disease has been described in very clear language. Avoidance of contact with lepers has been particularly emphasised and social ostracism practised. Even today in certain parts of India, lepers are treated as social outcasts and are often compelled to leave their village and the state. The result is a silent and steady movement towards the cities and bigger places where for want of other means of livelihood, they fall upon begging as the only resource. In these parts of India the reaction upon the healthy individual, when he sees a leper anywhere near him, is one of intense terror. Again, there are other parts of India where the people are entirely indifferent to leprosy, as far as social contacts are concerned. With them the old idea of hereditary nature

of the disease still holds good and the belief in contagion is not at all strong. Both the attitudes of indifference and exaggerated fear are unhelpful, if not harmful, and it is necessary that a more rational attitude based on sound knowledge of the simple facts of the disease should be adopted by the public. It is often stated by medical people that the majority of leper beggars are merely burnt out cases and are not infective, while lay people consider all lepers as infective. Truth, however, lies midway between the two.

The social position of those suffering from leprosy has a very direct bearing on the question of the increase of leper beggars. In certain parts of India and in certain communities therein the social consequences of leprosy are so serious that it is sometimes difficult for the diseased to remain in the village or to earn their living. If employed in industry or elsewhere, the mere knowledge that a person is suffering from leprosy, will bring about a loss of employment. Sometimes the disease may lead to partial or total disability and thus prevent him from earning his living This is how and why persons affected with leprosy tend to become beggars and naturally move towards localities where chances and prospects are better. This is true not only of the severely infective cases of leprosy, but often of persons who are suffering from a mild non-infective form which is not a danger to others. Sometimes employment is refused even when a medical certificate that the disease is arrested and non-infective, is produced.

Let us now see how and what actual danger to public health results from the type of leper beggars usually seen in the cities. They are a mixed crowd, some in the very late stage of the disease often considered the worst of them but in fact the least dangerous ; some in an infective stage, the lepromatous type ; and some in the very early non-infective stage, perhaps the consequence of close association with other lepers in the family. The second group is the most dangerous, but so far as offence to the sight is concerned, the first and the second are equally nauseating and loathsome. Leprosy infection occurs as a rule from prolonged contact, but the possibility of acquiring infection from the highly infective cases at close but short contact cannot be

altogether ruled out. Moreover, a patient who is non-infective today may pass on to an infective stage without even himself knowing of it. Hence the danger if beggars with leprosy are allowed to move about freely amongst others and particularly in crowded places. Whatever measures, therefore, may be taken should be directed against all the three classes. The public will then be spared not only the disgusting sight, but the disquieting condition and agony of mind resulting from a close contact with an infective leper.

These then are some of the main features of the beggar problem as it affects public health. Beggars, with communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis, small-pox, measles, leprosy, etc., are at large in our country, and they congregate in cities, at public fairs and pilgrimage centres, travel by trains and sleep on footpaths in large cities at night. Helpless, mentally deficient children, victims of sex preversions and prostitution, also spread social diseases far and wide. Denied any sanitary conditions of living, or opportunities for personal comforts which they cannot help snatching in open streets, avoiding law such as it exists, these socially disinherited unfortunates become helpless agents of infection throughout the country wherever they can chance to rest their weary heads. We have avoided detailed discussion of the various causes of the beggar problem and its remedies, as that falls within the domain of experts in Sociology. We have only touched on this aspect occasionally, confining our attention to the health aspect of it, since without reference to its etiology it would be like the staging of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark.

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PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION AMONG BEGGARS

Recently Mr. Amarchand Bhatia made, with the help of a fund donated by Mr. Birla, a research study of the beggar problem in Northern India, which reveals that beggar-cum-traders, beggar-cum-wandering minstrels and a hundred such other masked professionals, are recruited and organized from all castes and tribes. In this study he gives us some description of the different kinds of organizations which exist among beggars. On the basis of his findings he maintains that beggars evolve into organisational types, with large membership and with close governments of their own, and that therefore the problem should be tackled on all fronts.

ONE of the fundamental mistakes made in grappling with the menace of beggary is that of tackling the individual beggar, without tackling the organization—the "Beggars' Brotherhood"—which exploits him and thousands of others like him with impunity. Having not as yet fully acquired active self-consciousness, the individual beggar is absorbed in the life of the hordes, without the liberation of his ego. The calculating and foreseeing action of human reason should be directed against this organised force.

The Beggar Organisation aims at joint begging, pooling of all resources accumulated through individual or group begging, joint corporative household and joint worship of a "Guru" or

" Gods ". Further, it maintains fraternal relationship amongst beggars coming from a particular part of the country for the purpose of joint defence against the lawful forces of the Government; and it seeks not only to minimize the trouble engendered by individual endeavours but also to eliminate inimical individuals from within its rank and file. Some of these organisations are loose and casual which scatter easily and willingly, and break many a time within a year but again come into formation according to the exigencies of time. Others are very strong, powerful, self-supporting, self-determining, authoritarian, regional and communal, and only very hard knocks can smash and disintegrate them.

During my research work in the problem of beggary in the Punjab, I found that strong organisations existed in big cities in :—(*a*) the colonies of beggars; (*b*) orphanages; (*c*) temples, mosques, monasteries, shrines, cemeteries; (*d*) poor houses maintained by " exploiters "; (*e*) certain tribes living by river sides; (*f*) labour groups living both by wage and begging, and (*g*) certain villages. Loose organisations were found amongst beggars hailing from Kashmir, Tibet and Afghanistan. They, " invade " cities in organised groups in certain parts of the year and at the time of important fairs. Some parties of beggars, particularly among Pathans, were found to commit thefts, robbery and kidnapping at night.

Strong Organisations.—In the beggar colonies of the big cities of the Punjab like Lahore, Amritsar, Jullundur, Sialkot and Rawalpindi, interesting instances of organisational work were observed. The beggars there are governed by strict elaborate codes of behaviour, stern discipline and ceremonial drinking parties.

In the colonies of Lahore and Amritsar inhabited mostly by Hindus—coming from Rohtak, Hissar and Delhi—the following particulars are noticeable. The head of the colony is called the Chowdhry. He is the most daring of all " who can beg in the presence of high police and military officers, and on all occasions ". Under him is a board of five forming a kind of panchayat to distribute the booty and to control membership. Then comes

the bania who owns a small shop and is the accountant of the "Brotherhood". His shop is the clearing-house for stolen goods. He gets two annas per rupee as his share out of the earnings of the colonists. One-fourth out of this windfall is given away by him to the policeman on duty who visits the colony every day on some pretext or the other. The beggars have to buy their things from the bania and many of them remain indebted to him. In order to pay him they slip away from the colony now and then, and resort to individual begging, since the joint share distributed by the Chowdhry is insufficient. Otherwise, they move in groups. "Territories" are allotted and the groups go round the city by rotation so as not to be found by the police and the public at one and the same place. Special "squads" are organised to beg at temples and mosques and go round the churches.

Different methods of begging are assigned to different types of persons in the colony. An old, crippled man in a small wooden cart pushed by a woman must accompany every big party. One group consisting of five or six beggars forms a singing party. Another group is sent to be scattered individually over the main roads. A blind member is brought back in the evening by the eldest male child or elderly woman of the family. The blind, the crippled and the infirm are counted as assets to the colony.

A party of fortune-tellers is asked to stick to one road every day. Amongst them some own sparrows whose particular movements and picking and choosing the questions, and the owner's answers decide the fate of the passer by who wishes to know his future. The story-tellers are different. They begin a story and end it by selling inefficacious drugs and medicines.

A party is specially trained in the art of blackmailing respectable people by loud noises and uncouth words. He that can lash out the bloodiest oaths is computed to be the bravest fellow. The roarer is usually asked to go into a bazaar and stand in front of a shop and abuse the owner indiscriminately. After some time he begins giving blessings and then makes his demands. The knowledge of the family of the shopkeeper is obtained

beforehand by a reconnaissance expert of the colony, and is doled out to the person who is deputed to " picket " the shop. Many a time such picketing goes on for days together till the shopkeeper climbs down.

Many of these beggars are given training in keeping their noses, lips and ears closed by means of various devices. The practice lasts for one year or so. They are then sent out individually. So are those who can easily foam at the mouth by cleverly hiding a lump of soap between their teeth and conveniently fall into convulsions ; and those who have a genius for disguise develop a ponderous deformity with something elephantine in the folds of bandages about their legs, the stoop of the broad shoulders, and the repulsive and pendulous lip. Everything is done with considerable ingenuity, but a simpler and less painful method is by the use of an old rag with butter, frankincense, brimstone and rexin, blood and cream. Some of them (especially women), who can easily amputate or dislocate their arms and legs or can pose as being lame, are sent on special expeditions to persuade the credulous brandishing documents garnished with huge seals or signatures. They pretend as if their homes and husbands had been burnt and they were left destitute, or a famine, an earthquake or a flood had driven them to begging.

Some mix the rust of iron with unslaked lime and soap and spread this over a leather strap which they then bind to their legs. When the strap is removed, most of the skin of the leg comes with it. And blood is rubbed on the sore flesh. At night time they retire to a place undoing the bandages of their false wounds, and unstiffening their sound and vigorous knees which had been bound up since the morning in a thousand ligatures. Others prepare their sore legs with celandine and ox-blood for the morrow. Many attend fairs and festivals in the garb of sadhus accompanied by ' chelas besmeared with dust '.

Among the lesser orders of their " Brotherhood " are those who have acquired the trick of doubling back their tongues so as to make it appear that they had been born dumb. Their favourite story is that they had had their tongues cut off for speaking disrespectfully of " Durgā Mātā ". In fact their

trick is that they tie a thread to the end of their tongues and "communicate" this to some paste which they also swallow, thus drawing the tongues back and securing them. Some small boys are kept by the beggars on diet so that they become thin enough to worm through ventilators of big bungalows easily. Others are taught how to keep their eyes closed throughout the day so that they may look blind while begging.

These beggars have, with the proverbial subtlety of their kind, turned begging into a mysterious and esoteric art. If a beggar is a rogue, he is a jolly rogue. And he sings:

We have great gain, with little pain
And lightly spend it too;
We do not toil, nor yet we moil,
As other poor folks do.
We are winners all three,
And so will we be
Wherever we go.
For we know how
To bend and bow
And to do what is to be done.

Nine hundred rupees this cripple had got
By begging and thieving—so good was his lot,
A thousand rupees he would make it, he said,
And then he would give over his trade.

Thus goes the impotent cripple, nasty, ragged, lowsy, unclean, poor, dejected, humble, bare-legged, bare-armed, dark and deceitful beggar of the colony, swaggering along the streets of big cities.

When the chief of a colony is installed, wine is poured over his head and distributed amongst the members of the assembly. The newly-elected chief of the colony then asks them to repeat with him the Ten Vows which are:

(1) We shall obey the chief.
(2) We shall keep faith with our fellows.
(3) We shall keep counsel with our brothers.

(4) We shall share in all matters of the " Brotherhood ".
(5) We shall not hear the " Brotherhood " spoken ill of without seeking vengeance.
(6) We shall share all winnings.
(7) We shall keep appointments or attend meetings by day or night at any place decided on.
(8) We shall not divulge the secret of the place.
(9) We shall harm no fellow-beggars.
(10) We shall marry according to the dictates of the panchayat of the colony.

At the time of marriage both the bride's and bridegroom's party are to contribute Rs. 5-8-0 each and an equal amount is added by the other beggars. Meat and wine are distributed to celebrate the occasion.

The chief's powers are absolute. In one colony it was complained that, in order to increase his income, he allowed his daughter and wife to go to the railway clerks' quarters to earn their living by prostitution. But, others, though ready to follow his example, were not allowed to do so.

There are colonies exclusively of labourers, who work partly in factories and partly on roads and streets. Most of those who grind salt, work with the parties engaged in the construction of roads and buildings and have seasonal occupations, resort to begging in groups when not employed anywhere. Just like other " colonists," they organise parties with a division of territories under the orders of their " head " who gets one-tenth of the booty brought back by an individual beggar. There is no pooling of resources and every beggar delivers the share himself. The headman is a clever rogue and no beggar can baulk him of the tenth of the spoils. He keeps spies on his parties whom he helps in getting employment in the city. He is a landlord who leases his land for the construction of cottages. For each cottage he charges 12 annas per head in addition to the one-tenth share out of the earnings of a beggar. At ceremonies, like the initiation of members, marriages, betrothals, installation of goods, he also gets his due share which amounts sometimes to about fifty rupees.

The Lahore Corporation has tried many a time to come to grips with one such " head " but he always escaped like his " brothers " to other colonies, because being a Mohammadan, if harassed, he is able to make it a communal question with the help of his co-religionists. The beggars, however, are mostly Hindus. A striking feature of these beggar-colonists is that their children and women are also expert beggars. In many cases the head of the family does not beg but the other members do it in groups.

Some orphanages in the " big " cities of the Punjab, usually send their inmates early in the morning every day to various parts of the city as singing parties to collect alms. Some of them are bogus institutions and have been found many a time to be so by the police. Yet they spring up now and then under the patronage of a clever beggar-cum-trader. He is beyond the clutches of the law, and works with impunity. In a remote corner of a mohalla in the city, far off from the guards of the police, a few rooms are rented in some family quarters for keeping a few children and these are sent one by one till they assemble in a particular street where they start begging. Hindu children go to Hindu quarters, the Muslim to the Muslim quarters. A few Sikh children are also organised but they work individually and not in groups. They generally collect wheat-flour, mustard oil and ghee but rarely money.

The orphanages, that are registered bodies, do not encourage daily begging in the cities of the Punjab, but organise parties on ceremonial occasions. A few representatives of such orphanages, carrying locked boxes, are sent to railway stations where they harangue the tired travellers, and get monetary help from them. Many cases of bogus representatives carrying on the trade in the name of registered orphanages by paying something to the ticket-collector or the police have been traced. Some time back the police found a gang of clever men, engaged in such a trade, dividing the accumulations amongst themselves. At their headquarters in Amritsar, a large number of fictitious railway tickets, and boxes belonging to certain registered orphanages were recovered by the police. Their chief had his own house, a palatial building, and a number of disciples working

under him. They would go as far as Calcutta and Peshawar, and were alleged to be in league with certain railway officials and the Police.

In some temples and mosques the Guru or the Pir sends his chelas (disciples) round the city in the morning every day for begging. The collections are generally his property. The *gaddi* passes on to the eldest Chela. The others stay for being trained in the act of worshipping gods and have their meals and other comforts satisfied all gratis. These are religious orders, pure and simple. Many of them are of the highest respectability. The members living in monasteries or shrines live quiet, peaceful lives, keeping open the house to travelling sadhus or pirs, training their neophytes and exercising sometimes a wholesome influence upon the people in the neighbourhood. But there are a few such institutions which are strongholds of kidnappers and women seducers. Many cases of 'boy-hunters' have been traced by me during my research work, especially in Amritsar, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Jullundur. Some of the orders, however, do not keep up regular monasteries but travel about begging and visiting their disciples, though even here they generally have permanent headquarters in some village or at some shrine or temple where one of their order officiates. Their disciples are called Sewakas (in the case of Hindus) and Murids (in the case of Muslims). In some cases they marry and have carnal or bindi children. Generally they have spiritual children in their chelas, many of whom are notoriously profligate debauchees, wandering about the country, seducing women extorting alms by threat of curses, and relying on their saintly appearance for protection.

The Faqirs in the garb of regular orders, are generally seen wandering about the country living on the alms of the credulous, often hardly knowing the names of the orders to which the external signs they wear would show them to belong. Such men are mere beggars, not ascetics; their number, is unfortunately large in the Punjab. The Faqir class have in their hands the custody of petty shrines, the menial service of village temples and mosques, the guardianship of cemeteries and similar semi-

religious offices. For these services they often receive small grants of land from the village, by cultivating which they supplement the alms and offerings they receive.

The Bairagis are divided into several sections, each section being controlled by a head who is worshipped and offered a yearly fee. They are, for the most part, concentrated in monasteries and are exceedingly respectable. They are most numerous in the Jamuna districts (about 3,000 families), and are to be found in almost equal numbers in Amritsar, Lahore and Ferozepore districts. In Karnal, villages are held by descendants of both the children and disciples of the Bairagi monks. The Sanyasis, almost 2,000 families, are found in the Hissar district. The Gosavis appear to be confined mostly to the south-eastern districts.

The Sadhus are found in large numbers in the Upper Ganges —Jamuna Doab. From Farukhabad upwards their religious ceremony consists in eating together and running a common kitchen. The earnings are pooled and the meals prepared by them in turn. They hail mostly from Delhi and Hissar districts and Rohtak. A strong fraternity exists among them and one Guru alone has thousands of chelas controlled by 'Sub-Gurus' appointed by the chief. In the Shivalas are to be found well-organised Jogi Faqirs. About 5,000 families are scattered all over the Province. They are well-knit through a head who is paid Rs. 100/- every three months by each district under him.

The Aghori sect is found wandering about the streets, stark naked, leading a jackal or a dog by a string, besmeared with blood and carrying the same substance in a skull, to bespatter him who refuses them alms. The sect is under the "Akhara" which has branches all over the province and is governed by a council presided over by a chief.

Among the Suthra Shahi sect, some are notorious for gambling, thieving, drunkenness, and debauchery and lead a vagabond life, begging and singing songs of a mystic nature. They wear ropes of black wool on the head and neck, and beat two small black (chips) sticks together as they beg. They respect the territorial rights of every comrade of their sect, as assigned to

him by their Guru, living generally in a village and sharing the bounty afforded by his disciples.

About 8,000 male and 2,000 female Udasis, who believe in the Adi Granth of Guru Nanak, were found scattered all over the Province in monasteries under their chiefs with whom they shared their earnings. Many of them are clad in loin-cloth or *Kachha*. Generally, they keep to Gurudwaras but on occasions of big fairs they are seen in temples joining the ceremonies there. They have followers amongst Hindus who pay their homage to them in cash every Tuesday.

The Nirmalas (without stain), living almost entirely in monasteries, have a high reputation for morality. They have their big community at Amritsar and are governed by a Council, known as the Akhara, which visits periodically the Nirmala societies throughout the province which are controlled by a head Abbot or Mahant. About 2,000 families were found in Amritsar and Jullunder alone. They go as far as Bombay and Calcutta for begging.

The Diwana Sadhu ("Mad Saints"), coming generally from the Kangra district, are governed by a panchayat in carrying on their activities. They have big colonies there, and strict rules and regulations are maintained for the admission of members. A Guru controls them and assigns individual and group duties in various seasons.

Muslim Beggars.—Amongst the Mussalmans organised begging is resorted to by the following orders:—

(a) The Bharais or Pirahis. About 4,000 in Lahore and Ferozepur districts; about 2,500 in Gujranwala district; confined mostly to the central and sub-mountain districts and states. They go about beating a drum and begging in the name of Sakhi Sarwar, and conduct parties of pilgrims to the shrines at Nigaha. They also receive the offerings of the local shrines. They circumcise boys in western districts and often act as Mirasis, for whom they are often mistaken. On the lower Indus, they supersede the barber as circumcisers. It is said that the prophet gave his coat (pairahan) to one of their ancestors as a reward for circumcising a convert after a barber had refused to do so.

(b) The Madaris control many shrines. In the Punjab this order has about 25,000 males, 2,000 females, mostly in Ambala, Ludhiana, Jullunder, Hoshiarpur, Amritsar, Sialkot and Ferozepur.

(c) The Malang order (a branch of the Madaris) lives, mostly in Patiala, Malerkotla, Jullunder and Ferozepur. The members annually assemble at a certain place, offerings are collected and matters concerning the welfare of all are discussed.

(d) The Benawa order of Faqirs is found mostly in the Jamuna districts and Rohtak.

(e) The Jalali order has followers in the Jullunder, Amritsar and Lahore divisions. Candidates for admission to the order shave completely, burn their clothes and are branded on the right shoulder.

(f) The Hussaini order has more females than males among their members and are confined mostly to Gurgaon.

(g) The Qadiris are followers of Pir Dastagir whose shrine is at Baghdad. Found mostly in the Ambala, Amritsar, and Lahore divisions, they sit for hours outside houses in the city repeating: "Thou art the guide, Thou art the truth, there is none but Thee."

(h) Colonies of Darveshes (another sect of Faqirs) are to be found in Batala and Pathankot and in Amritsar and Kapurthala. They cultivate a little land, play musical instruments, beg, make ropes, go to a house where there has been a death and chant the praises of the deceased, and hang about mosques. Many recruits are allowed to enter the order on payment of a yearly fee to the head of a town or of a district as the case may be.

(i) Like the Qadiris the Naqshbandias, the followers of Khwaja Pir Muhammed Naqshband, found mostly in the Amritsar division, worship at shrines or on invitation by illiterate folks, by sitting perfectly silent and motionless, with bowed head and eyes fixed on the ground. For these performances they get alms which they share amongst themselves.

(j) The Chistti Faqirs, the followers of Bandh Nawaz, whose shrine is at Kalbaragah and who are confined to the

eastern half of the province, worship by leaping up and gesticulating and repeating "Allah-ya-Allah-Hir" till they work themselves into a frenzy and at last sink down exhausted. They divide villages among themselves and beg only in the territories assigned to them by their head. An annual meeting of the order is held in a central place by rotation where their chief is offered his share of the six-monthly earnings.

Loose Organisations.—Certain tribal beggars, like Sansis and Aheris, determined and fearless, living near river sides, come into the city in organised parties at night for begging. They resort to theft and kidnappings while giving the impression to the citizens that they are out to collect bread. This is in fact, a loose type of organisation, only meant for burglaries.

Amongst the outsiders the Kashmiri beggars, who come down to the Punjab in winter, are somewhat better organised than the Pathans or the Tibetans, the Bhats or the Rawals, the Bhands or the Bahurupias. A party of 100 Kashmiri beggars belonging to Mirpur Khas, Pahlgam and other parts of Kashmir, was discovered selling horses and after the sale begging in groups. A head is chosen as the party starts from Kashmir; his orders are obeyed so long as the party remains engaged in their "trade". Their womenfolk prepare meals together. When the party is to leave for another place, a group goes ahead to select the place to settle and the others follow. At the fag-end of winter, the party is dissolved and individuals allowed to go their own way.

The Tibetans also come down to the Punjab in winter, in groups of eight or ten. They arrange to get one or two beggars from the Punjab and with his or their help travel all over the province. At Amritsar they keep their head-quarters near Darbar Sahib (in which they have great faith). Their parties, after travelling up to Peshawar, assemble again at Amritsar; matters of common interest are discussed throughout a whole day and night. There is no Chowdhry but the cleverest of all is selected to preside over meetings and conduct its deliberations. After Dewali, they move down to Delhi and other places.

The Gipsies are another tribe of beggars having a loose type of organisation. They generally keep to the villages and

practise tumbling or rope-dancing, lead about bears, donkeys and monkeys. They are governed by tribal councils and often undertake ordeals to prove their innocence. A common form of ordeal is that the accused stands in a pond with a pole in his hand. At a given signal he ducks his head; while another man, honest and true, starts running at a fair pace for a spot 70 paces distant. If the accused can keep under water while the 140 paces to and fro are covered, he is acquitted. If not, he has to submit to such penalty as the council may impose.

The womenfolk of the Nats and Bazigars—jugglers and acrobats—belong to a tribe of vagrant habits; they are generally seen begging in groups of three or four. Muslim Nats are said to prostitute their unmarried women and, when a Nat woman marries, the first female child is either given to the grand-mother or is redeemed by payment of thirty rupees. These tribes are governed by a Raja and Rani, or King and Queen, like the gypsy tribes of Europe. Like them, Kanjars prostitute their daughters and do so in the garb of beggars. They form groups and are worshippers of Gujb Pir. Delhi is their headquarters.

The Hesis are a tribe of beggar-*cum*-wandering-minstrels of the higher Himalayan villages. The men play the pipes and kettle-drum, while the women dance and sing, and play the tambourine. They are the only class in Lahul and Spiti that owns no land. Though they are generally beggars, they sometimes engage in petty trades. Their headquarters are in Kangra, Mandi, and Suket, and they are governed by the orders of their heads who change, usually after three months.

The Gandhilas wander about bare-footed and bare-headed, beg, work at grass and straw, eat tortoise and vermin. They think that they own a kingdom beyond the Indus and are under a vow not to wear shoes or turbans till their possessions are restored to them. The head of the tribe thus keeps them loyal to him and is worshipped and given offerings which he hands over to a council of twenty for use in time of war to regain the lost kingdom. He lives like a "king of beggars" and leads a luxurious life.

The Bhats, bards and genealogists are usually seen roaming and begging in big cities. A Bhat is a hereditary servant, each local clan having its own Bhat who pays them periodical visits, writes its genealogy up to-date and receives his fees. At great weddings he attends and recites the history and praises of ancestors and the genealogy of the bridegroom. Those Bhats who come from, in and about Bikaner are generally dressed in silk. Different groups have different heads. Whereas men remain idle, looking after the things of the party, women organise singing parties, beg and sometimes serve as prostitutes too.

Then there are the Jogis, a thoroughly vagabond sect. They wander about the country beating a drum and begging, practising surgery and medicine in a small way; they write charms, tell fortune, and practise exorcism and divination; sometimes they settle down in the villages, eking out a living on their earnings from these occupations, and the offerings made at the local shrines of the Saiyadas and other Mussalman saints. Their Mussalman section is called Rawals (notorious cheats) in the central Punjab. They travel about the Central Provinces and the Deccan, and even visit Bombay and Calcutta where they pilfer and rob. As they are often away on these expeditions, the baniya of the village supports their families on credit, to be repaid with interest on the return of the men.

The Bahurupia, an actor or one who assumes many forms or characters, is a clever beggar. There are Bahurupia families in Panipat who hold a revenue-free village and call themselves Sukhs. In Sialkot and Gujrat they are called Mahatmas and are organised under spiritual heads. Some of them have acquired the trick of doubling back their tongue so as to make them appear as born dumb.

From the west of India comes a strange sect of praying beggars known as Aradhis, a mixed class recruited from Brahmins to Mahars, and curiously even from Muslims. Childless men whose hope of salvation is jeopardized, vow that if a male child is vouchsafed it shall be dedicated as an Aradhi. Aradhins or, praying girls, are famous for their charm and beauty. Many of the men mortify their flesh and become eunuchs. They go

about in bands of four or five with drums and one-stringed fiddle known as 'tuntune.'

Such are some of the organisations of beggars existing in North India to-day. Constructive social forces need to be mobilized to rehabilitate them. The organisations should be attacked on all fronts. It is no use tackling individual beggars. Religious feeling, no doubt, stands in the way of dealing with such organised bodies; this only means that the religious minded need an enlightened interpretation of religion. Where law can intervene, it should be used with firmness. Where reform can help, the organisations should be isolated and diverted to useful channels. It should not be difficult to turn the colonies into centres of useful small-scale industries and the colonists into helpful producers of national wealth. To treat the groups in the milieu on sound psychological basis with concerted efforts, and to hold back unorganised charity from flowing towards these organised beggar-monopolists by proper pressure on misguided philanthropists are an important part of the main responsibility of the authorities. But first we need to understand the forces that give coherence to these unsocial masses of our population.

6

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF BEGGAR RELIEF IN INDIA

The varna institution and the joint family system have had important bearing on the problem of beggary in ancient India. According to Dr. M. Vasudeva Moorthy, the former "defined the scope and methods of mendicancy, distributed the social burden of poor relief and prevented haphazard and promiscuous begging," while the latter encouraged the pooling of resources and the even distribution for all. But the institutions as, they exist, no longer fulfil these original functions; indeed, they do not even help to mitigate the problem. Further, the various forms in which beggar relief found expression, such as alms giving, sadavartas, dharmasalas, etc., which were financed both by individuals and the State, have also deteriorated. And consequently, the author maintains that the changed conditions call for new techniques for handling the beggar problem.

IN an enquiry into our methods of beggar relief one has to bear in mind some important factors in order to appreciate the problem in its proper perspective. The problem of beggar relief is a part of the problem of poor relief. Hence an investigation of beggar relief in India is really a part of the study of the methods adopted to alleviate poverty. Begging is associated with indigence. It is only the helpless poor that beg. Begging presupposes a condition of helplessness in which one *cannot* earn his livelihood by any means whatsoever,

and must perforce depend for existence on the goodwill of others. A person may be rendered helpless by becoming blind, by the loss of limbs or by any other disability; and being so disabled to earn his livelihood, he may have to live by others' grace. But if he is born in affluence or has relatives to look after him, he need not necessarily turn out to be a beggar. A legitimate beggar is he who cannot earn his livelihood and also has no one to befriend him but society. This definition, of course, excludes the able-bodied professional beggars being classed as "legitimate beggars." Religious mendicants, so long as they have no satisfactory excuse to offer for begging, are also not legitimate beggars but are really able-bodied ones. One may be a beggar by necessity or by inclination. But the problem of mendicancy is mixed up with the able-bodied beggars as well as the disabled poor and the helpless. In practice, we have the disabled begging side by side with the able-bodied. For, beggars do not much care to keep within bounds of finely defined categories; and the social worker has to deal with the problem of mendicancy in its entirety taking into account legitimate beggars as well as those who do not properly belong to that class but trespass into it.

There is another consideration also. Persons may be rendered temporarily helpless and be enforced to a life of begging for the time being. Such ones are usually poor children suddenly deprived of their parents or guardians, and also people made homeless and shiftless by calamities like earthquakes, floods and famines. This survey includes the consideration of all types of beggars. What was the strength and position of beggars in olden times in India? What was the general feeling in India regarding beggars? Were there institutions to relieve the helpless poor? And what were the ways and means adopted by the State and the people in general to render assistance to them? What was the nature and extent of this relief? These are some of the questions which we shall try to answer.

The problem of mendicancy appears to have been of little consequence in the very early India. According to Macdonell and Keith the word *bhikshā* in the sense of alms, as that which

is obtained by begging, is used in the Atharvaveda.[1] But "beggar is a term not found in Vedic literature."[2] The beggar as applied to the religious mendicant is a later extension of the term belonging to the system of the *Aśramas.*[3] This does not mean that persons mainly dependant on alms did not exist at all during the Vedic times. But religious mendicancy had not yet come to be established as an institution and professional beggary was not yet a noticeable phenomenon. The Aryans penetrated into India as invaders, not traders, and settled as conquerors, chieftains and landlords. The original dwellers of the soil were driven further south and those who were subjugated were converted into slaves and labourers. The early Aryans lived in India with the awareness of their belonging to the ruling classes. Psychologically they were averse to begging. Perhaps also, in those days of plenty and of less pressure of population there were not many persons who were forced to beg at others' doors. Moreover, this fact, revealed by Anthropology namely, that in all earlier societies it was incumbent upon the family, the clan or the tribe to support their own helpless members, applies to Vedic societies as well. In view of all these facts it is not surprising to find the problem of mendicancy very insignificant in the Vedic times.

Religious Mendicants.—The periods that followed, of the Brāhmaṇas and of the Upanishads, were marked by the emergence of a new phenomenon in the social history of India. The development of the Varṇāśrama system of life, which was collateral with the growth of ritual and philosophy, brought into being religious mendicants. Religious mendicants are those who have passed or renounced the householder stage of life and devoted themselves to wandering and asceticism. These are supposed to be interested in no temporal arts. They abandon and shun all possessions and professions. Their profession is self-realization and they maintain themselves by begging. The number of this class of mendicants in early times is not known. With the growth of Jainism and Buddhism, and the monastic

1 Vedic Index.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *Ibid.*

orders connected with them, religious mendicancy must have received a considerable accession of numbers. The pessimism which generally characterized the mediaeval ages, together with the introduction of the Muslim *fakirs* further increased the numbers. Now the problem of religious mendicancy is associated with vagrants and able-bodied beggars to whom yellow robes and rosaries afford a convenient mask and make-believe. The religious mendicant is to-day looked upon as a person possessing inscrutable powers of doing mischief or of dispensing good to whomsoever he likes. He is a miracle-man of magic and of medicine. People give alms to him more out of dread than veneration. The order of religious mendicants was never in such disrepute.

Factors Responsible for Beggary.—No account, however, is available of legitimate beggars during any period in the past, of those who were helpless on account of natural disabilities, of orphans and of those who could find no means of livelihood other than begging. But we must remember the fact that old India, particularly mediaeval, following the break up of the Empire of Harsha was composed of a congeries of states. Wars between these states were frequent and ferocious; and almost every war was attended by blood-curdling pillage. Also epidemics and famines left their devastating effects upon villages, towns and cities. In view of the frequent operation of these factors one may reasonably imagine that there were often periods during which many were rendered homeless and helpless. Though one may not exaggerate the uncertainty of life in the past one has to recognize that there were forces then as now which from time to time disorganized family life, beggared well-to-do persons, orphaned a few, and altogether threw many on the charity of other citizens, or on the mercy of the State. We should not also omit to mention the melancholy fact that in old India the nature of penal law was such that it left a few victims mutilated in body. For certain crimes, the offenders had their thumbs or hands or legs cut off. After their discharge, these unfortunates, unable to do anything, probably joined the world of beggars. Thus the problem of poverty and mendicancy is an old and yet a live one, calling for solution now and again.

Preventive and Curative Methods.—Methods of beggar relief in the past may be considered under two heads: (1) Preventive and (2) Curative. Usually, in a study of this nature, some include punitive methods also. But to describe punitive measures as a form of beggar relief is a trick of dialectical caricature. Punishment of beggars is no relief to them; though, perhaps, it may afford some immediate relief to society in that it is saved from the bother of beggars! Moreover, in the past, begging when one was helpless was not considered as a legal offence. Therefore, for the present, we may well dismiss the classification of punitive methods as a type of beggar relief.

Preventive methods of relief are based on the formula that a stitch in time saves nine. They are only present devices to ward off future troubles; and their adoption involves foresight and a profound understanding of the laws that govern social phenomena. Preventive relief measures in India in the past took the form of institutional designs and ethical regulations. The *Varṇa* and the joint family systems were considered by far the most efficient and co-operative institutional endeavours to restrain shifty and adventurous living, to limit and reduce to a minimum the social burden of vagrancy and mendicancy.

The Varṇa System.—How did the *Varṇa* system serve to prevent begging? Did it not rather allow, indeed encourage, the entire Brahmin community to beg? This is a paradox which calls for an explanation. It is well known that the ancient *Varṇa* system was based on the principle of division of functions. It is true that the Brahmins were allowed to beg; and we have earlier suggested that the Varṇāśrama scheme of life was largely responsible for the growth and prevalence of the mendicant orders in early and mediaeval India. But the popular belief that the Brahmins as a class were allowed to beg is not true. The Manusmṛti mentions begging (bhaikshyam) as one of the ten means of livelihood open to all those who are in distress.[1] All the four *Varnas* obtained livelihood through the performance of their respective functions. The Brahmins, as devoted to spiritual learning, were forbidden to amass wealth. They were

1 Manu, X. 116 (See Kulluka's commentary).

called upon to bear poverty; and history reveals that many high souled individuals in the past voluntarily renounced their wealth and embraced a life of poverty. Among the Hindus the goddess of learning (Sarasvatī) and the goddess of wealth (Lakshmī) are considered as naturally shunning each other's company. Scholars should take no thought of the morrow. "Sufficient unto the days is the evil thereof." This view explains why Brahmins were asked to live by begging during their pupillary stage. Either the teacher, if well-to-do, maintained his students or the students begged and maintained their teacher and themselves. The students went to the doors of three or five or seven different householders according to their needs, and "like bees" collected alms therefrom. This method of obtaining food or grain was called "*Mādhukarī.*" The tradition and opinion in favour of *Mādhukari* was so strong that no householder ever disappointed those students who came to beg at his doors. Indeed, the householder stage of life was highly prized and praised as enabling one to be useful to students and also others in other *āśramas*. In addition to students, *Sannyāsis* and *Vānaprasthas* also were advised to live by *Mādhukarī*. The Sannayāsopanishad gives elaborate rules which Sannyāsis should observe concerning the manner, time and place of begging. Manu prescribes the ways in which the members of the first three *Varṇas* in their pupillary stage of life should address the ladies of the houses where they go on asking for alms. This means that students of the three *Varṇas* were permitted to beg.

Begging as a Discipline.—Though begging was thus allowed to the students and the *Sannyāsis*, its scope was strictly limited with rules and regulations. Begging was not to be a nuisance to others but a discipline to oneself. Mendicancy was not an occupation; it was a form of austerity. It may be said that Hinduism generally discourages begging.[1] Living by alms is only permitted during certain conditions and stages of life. On the other hand, giving of alms (dāna) is considered to be one of the highest duties of man; and even those students and others

1 According to the canons of Islam also begging is forbidden. Read Report of the Committee on the Prevention of Professional Beggary in the Bombay Presidency (1920).

who obtain alms are advised to partake of their meagre receipts with their co-students and fellows. Not only giving of alms (dāna) is much praised but non-acceptance of a gift (aparigraha) is also considered as a course of conduct which all the *varṇas* have to observe. Indeed, it is looked upon as a mark of irreproachable virtue and integrity on the part of a house-holder to refuse the offer of a gift. If at all one has to accept a gift or ask alms he has to do it of a good and true man[1].

Varṇa Obligations.—According to the old *Varṇa* scheme of life, the duties of each *Varṇa* constituted the professions of its respective members. But the greater burden of providing for the community fell on the shoulders of the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas who were richer than the other two *Varṇas*. The Kshatriya, in fact, was held to be responsible for the material well-being of the entire Hindu community. While there was no lack of charities and employment for the higher orders the Śūdras' well-being was not unregarded. Manu says that the Brahmins should engage the Śūdras in their service and support them and their families according to their work and needs.[2] The Brahmins are advised to give to those Śūdras who serve them, the remnants of meals, old clothes, grains and such other things which the Brahmins can easily afford.[3] If the Brahmins were not able to maintain and support the Śūdras, it devolved on the Kshatriyas and on the Vaiśyas to engage and support the Śūdras.[4] The Brāhmins on their turn, maintained themselves by teaching ; and the Kshatriyas and the Vaiśyas engaged them as family priests (purohitas) and maintained them handsomely. It was common to make endowments of lands to learned Brahmins. And particularly during mediaeval India many were the scholars who were created practically zamindars. Peddanārya, who flourished during the heyday of the Vijayanagara Empire says that Kṛishṇadeva Raya gave away the village of Kokat and

1 Suddhat pratigrahah. As Kalidasa says: "Better is begging fruitless at the hands of a good man and true than that which is fulfilled at the hands of a mean fellow." (Megha.)

2 Manu. X, 124.

3 *Ibid.* 125.

4 *Ibid.*

several others to him in the districts of his choice.[1] By ancient traditions such endowments of lands to Brahmins were the custom all over India and the modern rentfree holdings such as *Śrotriyas* and *agraharas* are only survivals of old endowments. Being thus enabled to maintain themselves and others, it is no wonder that the Brahmins were required to employ and find support for the lower orders.

This injunction to find employment to the unemployed, especially of the lower orders was not merely an ethical obligation implied in the *Varṇa* institution, but also a legal enactment. Manu lays down that the King (the State) should enforce the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras to do the works belonging to their professions.[2] And in his commentary Kūllūka explains "*the king should punish those Vaiśyas and Śūdras (able-bodied) who do not work.*"[3] Manu further says, "If the Kshatriya and the Vaiśya, driven by the necessity for an employment (Vrittikarśitau) seek the help of the Brahmin, the Brahmin should support them by giving them employment accordingly.[4] And here, again, Kullūka explains: "*If the well-to-do Brahmin does not support those who approach him the king should punish the Brahmin.*"[5] This leads one to the two important conclusions: (*a*) *that in old India it was held to be a punishable offence on the part of the able-bodied unemployed to refuse the offer of an employment*; (*b*) *and also that it was a punishable offence on the part of the well-to-do to refuse to employ and support persons who were in need of such employment and support.*

We are thus justified in concluding that the *Varṇa* institution defined the scope and methods of mendicancy, distributed the social burden of poor relief and prevented haphazard and promiscuous begging. But the one great defect of the *Varṇa* system, from the point of view of poor relief, is that while some provision was made for the employment of those in distress

1 "Kokatagramadyanekagraharamuladigina simala yandu nicche."

2 Manu. VIII. 410.

3 "Akurvanau vasyasudrau rajna dandyau." See com. to Manu. VIII. 410.

4 *Ibid*, 411.

5 "Evam balavan brahmanah tavupagatavabibhranrajna dandaniyah." Manu VIII. 411.

it did not provide for the fluidity of employment. It created class and caste distinctions which are repugnant to modern ideas and ideals of social justice, solidarity and integrity.

The Joint Family as Relief Centre.—Along with the *varṇa* institution the joint family system was an important factor in the prevention of needless beggary in old India. The joint family was based and organized on the dual principles of trusteeship and equality. The elder member or members of the family held the entire property in trust and administered it in the interests and well-being of all the other members of the family. At the death of the father or the eldest member of the family, the eldest son was to administer the family property and maintain all the members. The unity and integrity of the family was the main concern of the joint family system. Whosoever in the family earned was supposed to earn for all the members of the family. No one earned for himself alone. Consequently all the family resources could be pooled together and concentrated and evenly distributed for the benefit of all the members. In one family there could be no distinction between the rich and the poor, which unhappy distinction is a recent phenomenon. Now-a-days a man can wallow in wealth while his brothers may be beggars. We know of callous instances where sons are affluent while the parent practically begs. Was there a lame or a blind member in the joint family? He had claims of benefit equal to any other members. Was there a widowed girl or a parentless child in the family? She had rights of lifelong protection and maintenance along with the other members. So far as benefits accruing from the property were concerned there was perfect equality among all the members. The unfortunate ones of the family were not driven to the hazards of a precarious mendicant existence. The joint family system brought and held together all the members under its broad roof and provided shelter and sustenance to every one. This benefit and regard to family members was strictly enforced by the State in ancient India. Writes Kauṭilya: "When a capable person other than an apostate or mother neglects to maintain his or her child, wife, mother, father, minor brothers, sisters, or widowed girls,

he or she shall be punished with a fine of twelve panas."[1] The State thus guaranteed the obligations and benefits of the joint families to their unfortunate members. It was also laid down that "when, without making provision for the maintenance of his wife and sons, any person embraces asceticism, he shall be punished."[2] In these instances the interference of the State was obviously with a view to utilize family organization and resources so as to minimize and keep within bounds the problem of beggars. *One is led to conclude that in ancient India it was held that family irresponsibility and family disorganization were the potent causes of beggary and that the State was anxious to nip mendicancy in the bud by insisting on family integrity and responsibility.*

The merits of the joint family system as a means of limiting and preventing beggary are manifest. The joint family system inculcates the lesson that if every family took care of its own members, beggars would be rare. Every family is viewed as a relief-centre; and since relief is provided to family members, the head of the family has the advantage of knowing personally and intimately the needs and necessities of individuals requiring help. But the joint family organization is an efficient medium of relief only when there are large resources at its command and when there are willing workers who replenish and rehabilitate the resources as they get constantly exhausted. With limited resources and expanding members, a joint family will soon collapse. And it is also ruinous to insist on a joint family with limited resources to provide relief to an expanding circle of unfortunate members.

Localization of Beggary.—Thus far we have shown how the institutions of the *Varṇa* and the joint family functioned as agents for the prevention and minimization of mendicancy. It is well here to take into account another contributory factor which operated towards the localization of beggary in old India. This factor was mainly physical in its nature, but it had its immense influence on the problems of begging. The conditions of the

1 Kautilya. Bk, II ch. 1. (Shama). It may be also mentioned here that the property of bereaved minors was safeguarded and improved during their minority by the elders of the village. See Kautilya. II. 1.

2 *Ibid.*

time, unassisted by scientific inventions imposed restrictions on mobility. The powers of space-dissolving steam had not yet been realized. Further, it is imaginable how old India. honeycombed with states, big and small, could have no well co-ordinated system of roads. Locomotion, of even the able-bodied ones, was limited and hazardous. It is to-day comparatively easy for the helpless poor to migrate from one part of the country to another. Rumours of colossal cities, of gigantic industries, of unheard of amenities, of the fabulous flow of capital, attract and concentrate the poor, the helpless and the vagrant in urban areas like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Ticketless travelling by the railways helps to move these adventurous unfortunates over immense distances. But in old India though poor relief and philanthropy ran amock in pilgrim places, beggars could not easily cover distances. It was impossible for a blind man or a lame one in Bangalore to migrate to Benares, though he knew that he could maintain himself better at the latter place than at the former by begging. At best, his range of begging all his life covered about a hundred miles round. Naturally, the beggar became personally known to the local citizens and the citizens became known to him. Necessarily, therefore, the problem of mendicancy was localized. Also, by legislative enactments the movements of vagrants and strangers were closely watched and restricted.[1] These physical and legislative restraints on mobility contributed to keep beggars within bounds. Unlike the present situation, beggars in old India were not massed, though perhaps in a few pilgrim places, those who could afford to move about a hundred miles gathered together. The local problem of mendicancy comes to-day to be concentrated in cities, like Bombay and Calcutta, due to facilities of transport; and cities are called upon to bear the burden of poor relief which should be legitimately distributed over wide areas and centres. Such a concentration of the mendicant problem was non-existent in the past in India. The

1 Read Kautilya's Arthasastra, Bk. II, ch. 34 to 36. "Whoever is provided with a pass shall be at liberty to enter into, or go out of, the country. Whoever, being a native of the country, enters into or goes out of the country without a pass shall be fined 12 panas." (Artha. Bk. II ch. 34).

old restrictions against such concentration have disappeared. In the mass of beggars, we miss the true ones.

Preventive methods of poor relief went a long way in alleviating human misery in old India. But they alone could not have sufficed to adequately meet the constant demand for relief, though they helped to control and keep within limits the numbers joining the army of beggars. In spite of all preventive methods of relief there must have been many helpless ones and numerous unemployed and hungry souls who needed assistance from society. What was the nature and form of relief given to them? This question leads us to the consideration of the curative methods of poor relief in India.

Curative Methods: *Almsgiving.*—Curative relief in old India emanated either from private individuals and institutions or from the State. Curative relief to the helpless springs from motives of kindliness, charity and sympathy. Relief to the helpless blind and lame, to the mentally deformed and defective, to orphans and the honest unemployed is a duty preached to all individuals by all religions. In old India there was no lack of private charity to helpless men, women and children. This charity took the form of giving alms to any one that came to beg at one's doors. The things given usually consisted of grain, cooked food and old clothes, and the helpless came begging only for these necessities. Alms were never denied to any one during the morning hours and during the evening hours and also during meal-time. In the morning hours, householders usually kept apart a quantity of grain to be given to all those that came begging. This practice of allocating for beggars a part of the grain in the household every morning is observed even now in our conutry. During afternoon and evening hours almost as a rule only cooked food was given to beggars; and it was, and still is, the Indian practice to prepare more food especially for the purpose of giving away to the helpless poor, and also to animals and birds. This method of relief was highly efficient in that it kept alive on the part of the householders the human sentiments of pity and kindliness and fellowship. Since it was usually cooked food and old clothes that were given

away the beggars used them almost immediately without having any idea of amassing and making business out of them. Also this kind of relief seemed to be continuous and not temporary.

Relief by individuals to the helpless poor was also given on festive occasions and feast days. When a rich man of the town or the village celebrated his son's or daughter's marriage, or when an heir was born to him, he usually fed and distributed clothes to the poor. This old custom prevails even now in many parts of the country. The idea of bestowing such gifts on the poor seems to originate in the feeling that when a man has an occasion to be specially happy he must endeavour to make all others about him put off their gloom and share in his happiness and thus earn their blessings.

Sadāvartas.—In old India well-to-do persons regularly fed fifty, a hundred or two hundred or as many persons as came to be fed, either at his own house or at any temple or at any public place appointed for the purpose. This custom of regularly feeding persons on every day or on select days was well known as *sadāvarta.* The tradition was that while a person had plenty to eat and drink and spare he should see that others about him did not go hungry. It was generally believed and the belief is still held—that in this life a person enjoys abundance of comfort because of his charity and liberality towards the needy during his past life; if one liberally shares with others what he has, he will have more yet in lives to come. Wealth comes to those who righteously spend it. Many Hindus according to the Hindu traditions are advised to regularly spend one tenth or one twentieth part of their earnings on charities. According to the Muslim traditions one should spend on philanthropic purposes one fortieth of his income. However, in old India persons regularly gave in charities according to their own capacities. During special months like Śrāvan among the Hindus, and Ramzān among the Muslims alms to the poor and helpless were freely distributed even by those who could not ordinarily afford to be charitable.

Dharmaśālās and Feeding-houses.—Along with the institution of the *Sadāvarta* there was the tradition of constructing

dharmaśālās for the benefit of the poor.[1] *Dharmaśālās* were free homes where lodging, and in some cases boarding, was made available to anyone in need of it. They were endowed mostly by very rich persons, zamindars and kings. While some of these homes were attached to temples in old India, others existed independently and served as powerful agents and centres of poor relief. Perhaps *jamaatkhānās* and *langarkhānās* (feeding houses) and *mussāffarkhānās* were Muslim prototypes of *dharmaśālās*. In the South during the early and mediaeval centuries rich persons, chieftains, and kings built free feeding houses called *ūṭṭupuras* where pilgrims on their way and poor persons could have their mess and lodging temporarily. Of the detailed working and administration of charitable institutions, of their constitution, of their legal position we have very scant information. Even to-day some of the old *dharmaśālās* exist, and old religious endowments and charities in some provinces are formally supervised by the government. But the exact position of old charitable institutions and endowments at present is not yet a decided question at law.

Orphanages and Hospitals.—In old India charities by private individuals and bodies were supplemented by State charities. In times of general distress, like famines, the kings temporarily established free feeding houses as the Bahamani kings did during the famines of the 14th century. According to Kauṭilya, during famines the king should distribute to his people his own collection of provisions or the collection of the rich men of the town. He may also take the help of his neighbouring kings.[2] We have already spoken of kings granting acres of land, even whole villages to the poor and deserving Brahmins.[3] Manu says that the king should always give gifts and do other kinds of charities to a learned Brahmin, to one who is affected by disease or affliction, to one who is young (an orphan), to him who is very old and

1 Charities among the Hindus were divided into two types, *Ishta*, which was of a spiritual character (like offerings and sacrifices), and *Purta*, which was secular in its nature comprising the construction of wells, tanks, lakes, temples, giving food, planting public gardens, etc. Rich men even to-day keep up the practice and tradition of endowing *purtas* for the benefit of the public and the poor.

2 Artha. iv. 3.

3 See also Kautilya, Bk. II. ch. 1.

also to him who is born in a noble family.[1] The king in his private capacity as an individual and a rich man dispensed gifts and charities to deserving persons. But being the head, and having great control of the institution and machinery of the State, the king was specially required to take care of the destitute and the helpless. Kauṭilya also says: "The king shall provide the orphans, the aged, the infirm, the afflicted, and the helpless with maintenance. He shall also provide subsistence to helpless women when they are carrying and also to the children they give birth to.[2] This statement by Kauṭilya naturally provokes the questions: how was relief and maintenance given to the orphans and the infirm, and poor pregnant women? Where were all these persons lodged? Does Kauṭilya refer to the institutions of orphanages and infirmaries and maternity homes with which we are to-day so familiar? Perverse, indeed, must that scholar be who in the face of this evidence can have the dialectical penchant to press the opposite conclusion. Indeed, history reveals that Asoka endowed many charitable institutions for the benefit of man and animal not only in his own empire "but also in the territories of friendly independent kingdoms" (Smith's Hist. of India). Fa-hien, giving an account of the Gupta Empire during the 5th century, mentions that in the towns of Magadha charitable institutions were numerous; and the capital possessed an excellent free hospital (Smith's Hist. of India). There is no doubt that this tradition of endowing charitable institutions for the benefit of the poor and infirm has continued to this day, though on a smaller scale and in spite of State indifference.

Provision for Employment.—The states in old India not only thus provided relief to the destitute and the helpless but also provided employment to those who were unemployed and could work. Here, again, Kauṭilya is illuminating. He refers to a construction called "working house" (karmagriham) being enclosed within the fort.[3] Though he does not give details

1. Manu. VIII 395, Srotriyam vyadhitartau cha balavriddhavakinchanam, mahakulinamaryam cha raja sampujayetsada.

2. Kaut. Bk. II, ch. 1.

3. Bk. II, ch. 4.

pertaining to the "working house" he elsewhere suggests the existence of "working houses," to provide employment to the helpless poor, particularly women who could not go about in search of any legitimate means of livelihood. The words of Kauṭilya are worth quoting: "Widows, cripple women, girls, mendicant or ascetic women, women compelled to work in default of paying fines, mothers of prostitutes, old women-servants of the king, and prostitutes who have ceased to attend temples on service shall be employed to cut wool, fibre, cotton, panicle, hemp and flax."[1] This means that some sort of work-houses existed to provide light employment to really helpless women. The employment of these helpless women was effected by the State through the medium of the maid servants of the weaving department of the State.[2] It appears that great regard was shown to the modesty of these helpless women and also promptness was observed in the payment of their wages.[3]

Spies and Ascetics.—The State employed able-bodied persons, who were in need of means of subsistence, in agricultural pursuits and industrial arts. Crown lands were open to cultivation by slaves, free labourers and prisoners. In old India the State particularly took care of orphans, dwarfs, the hump-backed and otherwise deformed and helpless people, and employed them as spies.[4] These persons were given training in the arts according to their aptitudes and sent out to do the "underworld work" of the State. Spies were drawn even from the ascetic orders. The management and maintenance of the ascetic spies were left to the supervision of a diplomatic recluse. He was provided with money and disciples and ordinarily carried on "agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade on the lands alloted to him for the purpose." For all practical purposes he was created a land-lord. Out of the produce and profits thus acquired, this ascetic was required to "*provide all ascetics with subsistence, clothing and lodging, and send on espionage such*

1. Bk. II, ch. 23 (Shama).
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Vide* whole of Bk. I ch. 11-12, Kautilya.

among those under his protection as are desirous to earn a livelihood (vrittikāma)."[1] This provision particularly for the ascetics, seems to be a special arrangement, made for the subsistence as well as for the benefit of the State and of the public. The State would benefit in that the services of the ascetics as spies would be available and the public would benefit in that the ascetics would not be social parasites and pests. Sāmaśāstry suggests that the present day *bairagis* may be survivals of the ascetic spies in old India. Maybe, with the distintegration of the old states and the rise and spread of British domination throughout India the institution of the ascetic spies became defunct. Since now the State has no use for them, and also since no provision is made for ascetics no wonder the *bairagis* move along the flags of fashionable cities begging and also flourish on fortune-telling and guiding the speculations at the exchange and the turf.[2]

From the foregoing account it is evident that beggar relief in old India was not neglected. The methods of relief expressed themselves in highly institutionalized devices and ways of living, which prevented the problem of mendicancy from growing to unmanageable proportions. The mutual responsibility of the *Varṇas* to help and maintain one another was insisted upon. Joint families were looked upon as primary social welfare centres. Religious tradition and legislation contributed to whip up, preserve and enforce family responsibility. The greatest feature of the problem of mendicancy in old India was, that it was localized. Every region was called upon to solve its own beggar problem. Naturally, the incidence of beggar relief fell on the region or area to which the beggars belonged. The citizens knew the beggars of their locality, and the beggars knew their benefactors; personal contact was thus possible between the two. Also, the State in old India took interest in the well-

1. Kau. I .11. Compare with this the words of the Committee on Beggar Relief in the Bombay Presidency, contained in their Report of 1920. "The trend of opinion among the enlightened heads of Sadhus is that the governance of the Sadhu community should be entrusted to the hands of the respective religious heads or an assembly thereof, and they may do yeoman service if they can see on the one hand the spiritual sanctity of their cult preserved safe and on the other if they can see means to place the entire community on a spiritually utilitarian principle." P. 2.

2. In Bombay city alone according to the census taken by the Corporation in 1921, the number of able-bodied bairagis (fakirs and sadhus) was 1,598.

being of the poor and the helpless. One would wish that it had not taken care of orphans and the deformed with a view to utilize their services as spies. It would have been better if it had employed them in nobler and more elevating occupations. Perhaps, in those days, it was thought that the orphans and the deformed and the otherwise helpless, being unable to earn a living by and for themselves in any other way, would be faithfully attached to the State and thus be excellent and sincere members of the criminal and secret intelligence departments of the State. However, it must be said that the relief and employment afforded to the helpless, though they did certainly alleviate the sufferings of the poor by answering to their animal needs did not, except in rare cases, conduce towards the unfolding of their personality. It is true that in the case of beggars their animal needs are exhibited in glaring relief. Their lean sides, their lack-lustre eyes, their hungry mouths clamour for food. Their gaunt structures claim the passing tribute of rags. In the sight of this appalling misery one is apt to throw food and old clothes at them and escape to brighter scenes with the secret satisfaction of beneficence being rendered unto the poor children of God. The philanthropist is apt to treat beggars as kindly as he treats animals. He forgets that beggars though they want their animal needs to be urgently satisfied, are not animals. Beggars are persons. Relief is that which not only temporarily removes hindrances in the way of living but creates permanent advantages and channels for good-living. Relief is not mere negative aid but positive uplift. Mere existence we assure even to the lower animals. Somewhat more than crumbs and clothes are due to man. The new civilization has destroyed old institutions. The *varṇa* obligations have become anachronistic. The joint family is disorganized. Old charitable organizations like the dharmaśālās have become effete and functionless. The competitive industrial economy of our times which has ousted the old co-operative rural economy from its place engages man in a ruthless struggle for existence. Mobility is bidding fair to outgrow the dimensions. And the State throws up its hands and disclaims its responsibility for

the growth of beggars. Until our present competitive economy is changed, until new social obligations are instituted and mobility is controlled to localize beggary and the State throws off its indifference and rehabilitates old charitable institutions along new lines, the hydra of mendicancy may well await the coming of its Hercules and Iolas.

7

FROM CHARITY TO SOCIAL WORK

"Social Work in India," according to the late Dr. P. M. Titus, "still remains on the medieval level. An attempt is here made to trace the story of the evolution of charity to the organized social work of the modern day. Perhaps such a description will help us analyse and judge our own charities in India in comparison with western charities and see where we stand and whither we are going."

CHARITY is as old as history. In its extensiveness it is universal. We see it among the most primitive as well as the most civilized. Its range is unlimited. It varies from the practice of giving indiscriminate alms to highly organized institutional care and well developed scientific social work. The evolution of charity through different intermediate stages in to the present day professional social work as we find it in many of the western countries is worthy of study and investigation. This is all the more important as we notice a general parallelism in the growth of charity in the West and in India, up to a certain point. One may even venture to say that as

against the modern advance in the West, social work in India still remains on the medieval level. An attempt is here made to trace the story of the evolution of charity to the organized social work of the modern day. Perhaps such a description will help us analyze and judge our own charities in India in comparison with Western charities and see where we stand and whither we are going.

Social work, privately organized, does for the poor man what a well-to-do man seeks to do for himself, with the assistance of a number of advisers for whose services he pays or upon whose friendship he relies. It is the channel through which philanthropy seeks to mitigate most directly those consequences of social process which are unfortunate in their effect upon certain groups and certain individuals. Public Social Welfare is the resultant ultimate recognition by the State of the necessity and usefulness of such services for the welfare of the community at large. That which has been done through private initiative and was supported by voluntary contributions is taken over by the State, supported by taxes and thus made secure and permanent.

The most characteristic elements of charity are doubtless derived from the feelings and experiences associated with family life. The term charity was first applied to the extension of social obligations beyond the immediate circle of kinship. But whether in a tribal group, religious body or political organization the main idea was that charity was an expression of the primary group feeling. "Taking care of our own" seems to have been the guiding motive in all charity work. Charity was always associated with religion. When it acquired the sanction of religion, it became a personal virtue, a religious duty and a social utility. At its best, charity has been the overt expression of the ethical impulse of the sensitive man to identify himself with the needs and sufferings of his fellowman. It represents the application of the golden rule in social relations; the practice of "Dharma" in responsible living. Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and all other world religions have exhorted their respective members to give charity. But in

actual practice, and in the development of organized charities throughout the ages, we find that extension was possible only by changing the note from pure altruism to personal gain. The doctrine of the religious merit of alms-giving became the cornerstone of all charities of the Christian churches in the West up to the 16th century.

In its early stage, the philanthropy of the church was mainly due to a natural sense of solidarity in a numerically weak community living in a hostile world. The eschatological hope had also created a heedlessness for any earthly care or possessions. But with the passing of the eschatological hope, with waning of the feeling that the Christian was only a temporary sojourner in this strange world, when the expectation of the speedy return of the Lord receded, much of the enthusiasm for open-handed philanthropy ceased. Moral exhortations were not enough to enlist support for charitable work. At the same time, the need for charity became greater. Individuals had to be coaxed to give alms by offering some personal gain for this voluntary act of mercy. Forgiveness of personal sins and ensuring the salvation of one's soul were offered in exchange for liberal contributions to church charities. "If there were no poor, the greater part of your sins would not be removed; they are the healers of your wounds;" so said St. Chrysostum. Almsgiving was the patent medicine for the cure of the disease of sin. Thus, aiding the poor was not an end in itself, but a means by which the almsgiver effected his own ulterior purposes of saving his soul and "made God his debtor." The worst part of such a practice was that there was complete disregard of the effect of such indiscriminate almsgiving upon the individual beneficiary. Almsgiving became impersonal. While the doctrine stimulated a spirit of self-sacrifice and of helpfulness, it encouraged begging and idleness. The usefulness of the spreading of the doctrine of the religious merit of almsgiving was that it served the development of extensive philanthropy and led to the relief of much suffering in a day when everyone lived in his own little neighbourhood group and regarded all outsiders with suspicion. The good work of caring for the poor was to

be carried on. Perhaps the most effective way to get support was to offer the reward of salvation which was believed to be within the province of the church to grant.

The principal agencies of relief which were organized in those days under the auspices of the church were the monasteries, the hospital orders, the hospitals which grew out of the earlier zenodochia, the religious fraternities, the alms of individuals and the religious loan banks. Care of the poor, visiting the sick, lending money at low rates of interest, and similar eleemosynary activities were the main features of these ecclesiastical charity institutions in the Middle Ages.

Apart from the institutional charities of the church, we find a system of well organised mutual aid practised in the medieval communities. The social structure of the middle ages may be described as an enormous number of small and practically independent units. Within these local groups, be it manor, parish, guild, or religious community, everyone was intimately acquainted with everyone else. There was a sort of primary group relationship and mutual aid was as natural and spontaneous as it could be under such circumstances. Self-sufficient, isolated, fixed social units, organized for self-preservation and mutual support within their respective limits, served as dynamic centers of socialization and mutuality. But the circle was limited and relation with outsiders and members of other communities was usually one of hostility. There was little social contact with people beyond the local group in which they lived, worked, played and worshipped. There was no need for organized charity, because misfortunes were not faced individually but collectively. The burden was shared by all neighbours. Very similar to the manor, and sometimes identical with it, was the parish. Priests were to take tithes from the parishioners and a third of the amount received they were " in all humanity mercifully to distribute with their own hands for the use of the poor and strangers." It was not lack of mutual aid within the parish that necessitated this form of organized charity. This form of charity was meant for those strangers in the parish who were detached from their own primary groups.

The medieval guilds were a sort of closed corporations of monopoly within which there was a close community of interests. Mutual aid and neighbourliness were as simple and unaffected within the guilds as in any other primary group. But relief was given almost exclusively to members of the respective guilds.

Thus, the secular units of organizations cared for their own by practising simple neighbourliness. The ecclesiastical charities took care of the needy strangers through institutional care and open almsgiving. The source of support for the latter was voluntary donations collected by appealing to individual desire for personal salvation. It was ameliorative and not constructive; curative and not preventive. There was no thought of reconstruction of society to eradicate the institution of beggary. In fact, for the salvation of the souls of the rich donors of charity, poor recipients of alms were necessary.

" The established folk saw in the wanderers means of divine grace for themselves. The unfortunate and the needy were regarded as an asset! It was not necessary to put themselves in the places of the poor......On the other hand, the beggars saw in the rich simply possible sources of food and clothing. On neither side was there recognition of human personality in its richeness and fullness. The mental image was a highly refined abstraction rather than a recognition of man as man."

Howsoever reprehensible such an attitude might be, one should not overlook the fact that medieval religion as such, never lost sight of the social obligation of caring for the poor. The expression of social consciousness in those days, consistent with the mood of the times, was not so refined and enlightened as to be normative for all times.

But society could not remain static. Social changes had to come. The old feudal fixed and isolated communities were to break down due to pressure of political, economic, social and religious changes. Increase of commerce, during and after the Crusades, gave rise to the growth of innumerable towns. Rise of nationalism knocked out the already weak props of feudalism. The abuses of the church, especially in the field of raising funds for church charities by selling " indulgences " brought in the

Protestant revolution. Thus, different social and political units were organized in the West on the lines of new cleavage that came in after the middle ages. These radical social changes had their effect on the development and organization of charity in western countries in the subsequent period.

With the rise of the townships, there came the organzation and growth of municipal charities. With a larger and more heterogeneous population, much more mobile and extensive than medieval group, the need for organized charities on secular lines became a necessity. The early municipal charities were more personal than the indiscriminate almsgiving that preceded and accompanied them; they were less personal than the mutual aid of the simpler group. But the change was more important, in that it was both a transfer of power to a secular civic body and also an assumption of responsibility by a geographical community, rather than by an exclusive religious fraternity or vocational guild. It was the extension of the principle of municipal charity that subsequently developed into the public charities of the State. After the Industrial Revolution, when life in the industrial centres became extremely impersonal, and when the population in such areas became heteorgeneous and mobile, such public charities became indispensable. Dissolution of early forms of church charities left the poor without any door to go to. Political and economic changes set loose a vast mass of uprooted humanity. Repressive measures proved to be abortive. Necessity, as well as civic consciousness, led to the initiation of public assistance in the early days.

Another important factor to be reckoned with is the Protestant Reformation. Breaking away from the Mother Church, Protestantism developed new strands of thought and behaviour. It put the individual at the centre both in regard to personal moral responsibility and social duty. The revulsion against the old theory of personal reward for charitable work was great. The ground work of the theory of charity was recast. The conception of personal reward here or hereafter to the donor of charity was eliminated. The deed was good only in the same sense in which the doer was good; it had in it no intrinsic merit.

The appeal of charity was to the moral and social consciousness of the individual. Private charity of Prostestant churches in the West thus developed as a result of the moral and social consciousness of their members. The basis of charity thus became the needs of the recipients of charity rather than the benefits the donor might acquire by giving charity. Charity was interpreted as contributive to the welfare of the community at large.

This new orientation revolutionized the philosophy and technique of charity. The Protestant Reformation together with the growth of urban areas with their incidental complexity and social problems, initiated new kinds of charity. In fact, charity graduated into a more sensible form of constructive social work. The origin and growth of the English Poor Law of the 17th century is an illustration. It developed a new technique. The English Poor Law represents the development of a consciousness of national responsibility for dealing with the problem of poverty. Begging was repressed. In the earlier stages it organized, regulated and defined the relief which was actually administered by the units of local government. Later it organized a national system of relief. Finally it led to old age pensions, and health and unemployment insurance as parts of a national programme to diminish the amount of poverty and misery.

Another contribution of the English Poor Law system was the gradual development of a consciousness of the futility of mere relief. The case-work method in social work evolved out of the experiences of the administrators of poor relief.

It must also be mentioned that the growth of the democratic tradition contributed a great deal towards the new outlook and interpretation of charity. The older method of benevolent patronizing—of throwing crumbs to the poor—was no longer consistent with the democratic ideology. It was to be social work—work to salvage society from disintegration and chaos arising out of inequality and callousness. Provision of decent standard of living for all citizens was accepted as one of the cardinal principles and goals of the democratic way of life. Individual needs were not to be only temporarily ameliorated;

the community was to be built up by taking care of all the factors and elements that go to make up a good community.

Alongside of the development of such a trend of thought, new problems in greater magnitude began to confront social workers. The rise of capitalism, especially after the Industrial Revolution, challenged all social thinkers with various problems. The growth of industrial and commercial centres brought together a large concourse of working class people into congested areas. The insanitary factories, crowded houses, long hours, low wages, employment of women and young children, periods of industrial depression accompanied by unemployment and monotonous existence, presented a real challenge to those interested in their fellowmen. Along with these new problems came the breakdown of customs, habits and morals. There was general social disorganization.

The recognized tasks that the Industrial Revolution set for 19th century social work included: protection of health through sanitation of factories, housing and medical service; provision of regular employment with adequate remuneration; provision for disability and old age; protection of children; education; recreation; prevention of racial conflicts; care of the new immigrants and all sorts of other new problems which were not present or at least were not recognized in the old order of society. There was to be a new basis of social organization.

Different groups, classes and interests responded to this new situation with different methods of treatment and varying motives. The exploited victims of the new factory system began to organize and revolt against the injustices they had to suffer. As a result of social agitation both by the workers themselves and also by socially conscious philanthropists and social workers, social legislation was enacted for the protection of the disadvantaged classes. There was also the organisation of social work by the middle class "uplifters."

The religious groups—Protestant, Catholic and Jewish—established many social service agencies to take care of the needy among their respective communicants. Protestant Churches, especially of the Calvinistic tradition, started many insti-



BOMBAY FOOT-PATH NUISANCE

"Use Foot-paths only" we are advised, but where are the foot-paths to walk upon? It is a common sight that Bombay foot-paths are generally occupied by beggars, hawkers etc., and it is useless asking the public to use them, unless they are free from these kinds of encroachments.

The picture shows a beggar occupying the footpath. Note the piece of cloth spread, just "to reserve his area".



OLD SADHU

Like the "Old man of the Sea" in Sindbad's Fable, this old Sadhu displays for any alms that may be given, his long matted hair, which trails on the ground, and which he hangs across his arm when moving about.

tutions, like Neighbourhood Houses and Social Settlements, to promote activities in community-building. Many non-sectarian agencies were started by the Protestant laity.

There was also a line of pseudo-philanthropy which extended charity to " keep the workers contented." During John Wesley's days, the aristocratic group in England, so it is told, resented the social service programme very much in the beginning. But they were gratified and co-operated when they recognized that Wesley's programme had saved England from an economic revolution by the uprising of the disinherited masses. Even to-day we see instances of such pseudo-philanthropy, seeking to maintain the status quo rather than eradicate social evils. Many a gift to charity has been part of an effort to make the feudalism of industry benevolent and therefore acceptable—and at the same time to preserve its feudal status. This kind of benevolence has often prevented the growth of economic democracy.

Numerous industrial concerns set up welfare departments of their own for the benefit of their employees. Such work often savoured more of gratuity and patronage than of co-operation: of benevolence rather than justice. Some of the labour leaders in America interpreted such welfare work as chloroforming the workers, keeping them from organizing. But so long as capitalistic industrial organization is continued on a feudal basis, such welfare work at its best is something done by employers for their employees because of real humanitarian interest in the workmen for their own sake. At its worst, it is a scheme for more complete control of the working people by the owners of industry—a mere camouflage for exploitation.

There was also a widespread soft sentimentalism in those days which gave opportunities for many a Lady Bountiful to go around visiting the poor with baskets of provisions. This afforded opportunities for social climbers and political opportunists. To be the chairman of some committee for social service, to be advertised as a generous contributor to good causes, and such other ostensible interests in social service were accredited means to gain titles and wide social recognition.

But after we have discounted the social climbers, the cheap politicians, and the Ladies Bountiful and the poseurs, and given recognition to the truly benevolent bourgeoisie, there is to be noted a band of genuine social workers for whom social work was not merely charity, but also public service. For them it was not a spare-time diversion nor a means to some private end. It was a full-time job to which steady application and whole-hearted devotion were spontaneous and essential.

The appalling conditions of the poor and the lack of any co-ordination and co-operation between the many private societies that sprung up in the early days led to over-indulgence, neglect, fraud and all other kinds of abuses. The Charity Organisation Movement of the latter part of the last century was an effort to improve the condition of the poor and co-ordinate the existing societies. The Charity Organization Societies which were started with very modest ambitions contributed a great deal to the field of modern social work. The C. O. S. helped in the correlation of many agencies. It organized a system of relief which eliminated duplication and neglect. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the C. O. S. has been the development of what is called today the " case method " of analysing and treating human problems. The study and treatment of each individual and family as a unique problem by the " case method " made social work more intimate, personal and effective. The emergence of social work as a well defined profession and the growing emphasis laid on professional qualifications for social workers may be traced back to the C. O. S.

With the increasing number of social service agencies in the modern era there was greater necessity for co-ordination of these agencies. A group of agencies began to specialize in co-ordinating and unifying social work. Conferences—national, regional, state and local—served to weld together social workers and create common interests. Professional and functional organizations also furthered unity and recognized standards. Councils of social agencies, organized in major cities, now develop co-operation, help in raising standards of work, do research work and encourage central planning. Financial federations, like Com-

munity Chests and Community Trusts, are organized for co-operative budget-making and money-raising in most of the important western cities. Foundations with large assets have been established to support organized philanthropy and social work.

Diversity of social problems demanded specialized forms of treatment. Social work began to get defined in different specialized forms. The catch-all charitable institutions of early days gave way to specialized services under professional leadership. This led to the development of many functional groupings such as family service and relief agencies; agencies for the care of the aged; different types of services to children, such as foster-home care, institutional care for the destitute, disabled and handicapped juvenile court work; employment and vocational guidance; protective services; group work, recreation and informal education; different types of health services; industrial welfare work, etc. If we glance through the social service directory of any of the major cities in the West, we discover the highly developed functional organization of private social work.

Alongside of the development of specialization of services came specialization of techniques. This led to the professionalization of social work, and professional schools for training social workers were started. Organizing ability and expert training became more important than strong sentiment and "inspired" leadership. Social workers today are expected to have refined technical skill.

Emphasis has been laid by private social agencies on preventive and constructive measures. Social investigation and surveys have been made to furnish the basis of remedial and preventive activities as well as to educate the public on social needs.

The benefits of co-operation between private social agencies cannot be over-emphasized. In the matter of raising funds alone, we find that organization of community chests for the joint-financing of private social agencies in the major cities of America has been extremely helpful. Community chests were organized to avoid duplication of effort and equipment, and

reduce competition and expense in money-raising. The annual concerted drive for the support of co-operating social agencies has helped in the raising of larger amounts and also avoiding confusion and restiveness in the minds of the subscribing public. The appreciation of the success of such efforts in joint financing is revealed in the rapid growth in the number of community chests.

Community Chests and Amounts Raised, 1914-31

Year.	*Number of chests in existence.*	*Amount raised annually in dollars.*
1914	1	22,437
1919	12	14,224,740
1924	180	48,850,000
1929	329	72,743,916
1930	363	75,108,792
1931	377	83,213,428

The number of community chests has increased since 1931 and almost all the major cities have such joint-financing agencies. The chest is accepted today as a permanent method of financing social work. All evidence indicates that it has stimulated systematic giving for social welfare activities.

Community trusts which have developed in the United States within the last 30 years are for the support of local activities. In the case of trusts the fund is permanent rather than annually collected and expended. Contributions are made to the trusts either in the form of gifts or bequests. More than 75 cities had set up community trusts by 1931, and their aggregate funds amount to more than $35,000,000. In addition to this there are Philanthropic Foundations with heavy endowments. In 1931 there were 350 such Foundations. The total assets of the 20 largest Foundations in that year amounted to about $860,000,000.

The amount of money contributed annually through voluntary subscriptions for recurring expenses for the private social agencies in the large cities may be illustrated by taking

a single city like Chicago. Chicago with a population of nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions has some 500 private social agencies. The financial statements of 262 of the more important of the 500 agencies show that including capital gifts a total of 11 million dollars were contributed through voluntary subscriptions in 1938. If the total contributions for all the 500 agencies of Chicago were taken, we could safely assume that the annual per capita voluntary contribution for private social agencies in Chicago was $5.00 that year. The per capita giving to organized social work in Chicago is exceeded by most of the major centres of population in the United States.

The story of the evolution and development of private charities in the Western countries is, in general, the story of the growth of community consciousness. Private charities have not been content in continuing their services for all time depending on voluntary contributions of private citizens. In the course of history we find that the isolated philanthropy of one generation became the organized charity of the next, and finally a public charge. Private social agencies have been instrumental in the promotion of much progressive social legislation. The policy has generally been to initiate a variety of socially necessary services, experiment with methods of administration and then seek to secure permanent financial support from tax-funds when the services appear to be a legitimate public undertaking. The absorption of social service activities as a part of public administration has been going on at an accelerated rate during the last two decades. The private agencies of to-day both supplement the public welfare agencies and blaze new trails. The relationship is not competitive but co-operative. It is recognized that in experimenting, promoting and maintaining standards, in using imagination and a flexible approach to social problems, the private organization has a great advantage.

In the field of public welfare, the underlying concepts and philosophy have undergone revision, away from the old condescending charity and philanthropy to the newer ideals of democratic service. The theory that the tax-payers of the community must provide the necessities of life for those unable

to provide such necessities for themselves is accepted today as sound and valid in democratic countries.

The advance made in this direction can be noticed when we look at the list of public assistance programmes undertaken by governments both in Europe and America. Towards guaranteeing social security, unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, blind persons' pensions, family endowments and allied measures have already been taken. Statutory regulation of wages and hours of work in factories has been initiated to protect the workers from exploitation. National health insurance schemes are already functioning. Public housing projects have been started to rehouse the slum-dwellers in decent quarters. Large amounts of money are spent for public relief. Institutions of all kinds to take care of the dependent, destitute and handicapped are maintained at public cost.

Since 1933, after initiation of the New Deal Programme by President Roosevelt, public welfare activities have increased extensively in the United States. Humanitarianism, together with a more sincere effort to translate the ideals of democracy into concrete action, have inspired the modern developments in America. Social welfare has, at least, been fully accepted as one of the recognized objectives of the National Government. The best defence of democracy is increasingly recognized as democracy itself.

In the light of this brief history of charities in Western countries, we can judge the status of our own charities. Much of our charity is still based on the doctrine of the religious merit of almsgiving. It is shocking to hear a Hindu Mayor of a large city objecting to a scheme for the elimination of beggary by establishing a poor house on the ground that such an action will be prejudicial to Hindu religion and Indian culture. He maintains that if the poor are not in the easy reach of the public, the latter will not have opportunities to give alms and thereby obtain religious merit. He wants to keep them in our midst to keep us humble. As in Medieval Europe, indiscriminate almsgiving is continued here in India without any regard for the consequences so far as the recipients are concerned. Much of

the misery and suffering of the poor are interpreted in terms of " karma " or " kismet ". Institutional charities are organized on communal lines rather than on a community basis. Comparatively, our public welfare programmes are far too thin and halting. We often boast of our old culture and are maintaining that the Indian concept of society is that of an organic unity. We often repeat to ourselves that " Dharma" reveals the soul of India. But Dharma in practice is far from being satisfactory.

To be sure there is much talk on political platforms about the sad fate of the " dumb millions " of India. Different panaceas are suggested by different groups and different persons. Many programmes give evidence of little thought, and very often one suspects there is too much concern to be original rather than be practical. The rise of Nationalism has made us turn our back on everything alien. To be lamenting over the good old days of glory and contentment, to find a scapegoat for all our ills and then go about with slogans, " back to the villages ", " back to handicrafts ", " back to our own culture ", are not going to get us anywhere. We cannot go back even if we want to. We are not living in isolation. Times have changed and the world has changed. Intelligent planning means the use of the accumulated wisdom of all times and all climes and then to try to solve our problems in the light of such wisdom and knowledge.

What can we do ? So far as the expansion of public social welfare programmes are concerned, times and circumstances are such that we cannot do much in the immediate present. Unemployment insurance, old age pensions, health insurance, blind pensions, and such other social security programmes are beyond our immediate scope. It is in the field of private charities that we can do something. Today private charities are all unorganized without any co-ordination or co-operation. We can respect the individuality and independence of each and every separate institution, and yet organize on a sound basis, if only we are willing to co-operate. If we are incapable of co-operating in our activities which are essentially the expressions of our humanitarian impulses, is there any hope of our co-operation in any other field ? It is by working together that we create

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What can we do? So far as the expansion of public social welfare programmes are concerned, times and circumstances are such that we cannot do much in the immediate present. Unemployment insurance, old age pensions, health insurance, blind pensions, and such other social security programmes are beyond our immediate scope. It is in the field of private charities that we can do something. Today private charities are all unorganized without any co-ordination or co-operation. We can respect the individuality and independence of each and every separate institution, and yet organize on a sound basis, if only we are willing to co-operate. If we are incapable of co-operating in our activities which are essentially the expressions of our humanitarian impulses, is there any hope of our co-operation in any other field? It is by working together that we create

unity and *esprit de corps.* Co-operation in the organization of private charities is one of the best and most feasible programmes we can launch forth because the motives and goals of the various organizations are the same, *viz.*, the amelioration of human suffering.

It is the major cities that can take the lead in this direction. Here in Bombay there are about five hundred charity agencies. There is no co-ordination, no co-operation, no sharing of experiences, no co-operative discussion of problems. We have not yet begun to think in terms of Bombay City as a whole as an urban community. Parsees, Hindus, Muslims, and other communities run their respective charity institutions to render aid to the needy in their own communities. The first thing we can do is to organize a Council of Social Agencies, enlisting as members as many charity institutions as are willing to affiliate. This Council can start out as a fact-finding and consultative body, with a professionally efficient staff. The Councils of Social Agencies in the major cities of the West are composed of member institutions which are as varied as they are here. But they have learned by experience the value of such co-operation, so that majority of the institutions belong to such councils.

Such a Council, if and when organized, can initiate a plan for the financing of social agencies in Bombay. Now each institution is dependent on the good-will of a specific limited constituency of supporters. At the same time philanthropically inclined people are bothered too often and by too many different institutions with appeals for funds for this or that institution. A City Fund on the lines of the Community Chests in America can easily be organized to make the present operation of agencies more secure and also to avoid confusion in the minds of subscribers to charity agencies. A concerted drive for funds, with sufficient data gathered to educate the public about the social needs of the City, will certainly bring in larger funds and many other intangible results. The urgent need is to have a co-operative body of social workers to launch a programme of public education in regard to the urgent needs of social work in the city.

There is enough cosmopolitanism and broad-mindedness

in Bombay to take the initiative in this matter. Bombay can lead the way for other major cities to follow. Nowhere have we seen any instance of any evil arising out of co-operative activity. There is no reason to believe that there will be any danger if we try such an experiment in the field of social work. The only question is whether we have sufficient good-will, imagination and public-mindedness to begin.

8

THE CITIZEN AND SCIENTIFIC PHILANTHROPY

"In a country like India where population is large and badly housed, the standard of health low, illiteracy extensive, the woman suffering from various handicaps and the child neglected, public and organised efforts should be directed towards the restoration of a sane social life" writes Dr. B. H. Mehta. But our present methods of giving relief are outmoded and he, therefore, rightly pleads for a scientific basis for philanthropy.

THE word charity must be occurring in every language. The primitive man and the barbarian knew of charity in some form. The workingman in the slum knows the meaning of giving, and even the beggar is known to share his little with his brother in want. It is generally believed that the injunction 'to give' was given by religion. However, man, being an irrational animal, has given because of a spontaneous, emotional urge; charity yielded its emotional dividend in terms of satisfaction felt by the giver. This will to give was further emphasised by religion, and charity became a stepping stone to spiritual uplift and it promised to restore a balance between this world and the one that was believed to come next.

The forms of charity were not conditioned by the capacity of the giver, and as charity became a habit, it was practised indiscriminately by millions at every time and in odd places. In oriental countries charity has become a universal aspect of daily life. In India charity is all-pervasive and is practised by every community. It is so extensively indulged in that it has almost become an evil. In the West, too, Christianity has not failed to stress the importance of giving in the ordinary life of man.

It can be easily seen that charity occurs most where there is wide-spread poverty. Alms-giving was a common and easy practice in feudal times where the rich and poor classes were so sharply divided. The business communities too practised charity because they believed that they must give because they get. The beginning of the industrial era saw the birth of a new type of mass poverty, and it led to the origin of other forms of charity. Today, charity prevails in countries which are governed by the principle of *laissez-faire.* Charity can function indiscriminately in societies where the individual is free to accumulate wealth and property and is also free to dispose of these according to his judgment. A new phase began when law and the government stepped in first to control and then to direct charity. In some States charity was even enforced by law in the name of taxation.

Today, with a war, which aims not only to decide the fate of nations and the forms of government that are best suited to promote human welfare, but indirectly also to alter the basic beliefs and fundamental outlooks of humanity so that relations between man and man may be redefined, the problem of charity must also take on a new meaning and be made to fit into the type of the new world that is being born. Even at the end of the last war, charity received a new interpretation in certain countries. Soviet Russia, by ending or restricting the possession of private property, limited the possibility of distribution of surplus wealth according to the wish of the owner. By providing employment and at least the bare needs of existence an attempt was made for the complete eradication of poverty. The new interpretation

given to religion undoubtedly affected the religious impulse towards charity.

The Soviet experiment is a mere indication of the trend of human thought and outlook in the present century. There is almost a universal recognition of the need for a better application of the principle of social justice. The eradication of poverty is put as a first charge on the shoulders of any civilised government. The State is gradually assuming the full responsibility for the welfare of every citizen, removing the burden of voluntary obligations undertaken by public organisations and private individuals. Even where there is accumulation of private property, governments are attempting to control them by imposing heavy death duties and graded taxation. The spread of education and the removal of State interference in religious matters are gradually rationalising religious thought and sentiment.

Recognising the above trend in human affairs in relation to the practice of charity, it will be evident that the ideal condition in society will be the gradual elimination of the need of charity as the masses come into their own and are able to live in dignity and self-respect on the fruits of their own labour. The practice of charity may be prohibited by law as states recognise the need of scientific measures to promote human welfare. Leaving aside the considerations of the ideal, and not knowing the nature of world organisation that will emerge at the end of the present war, we may consider the immediate remedies and measures that should be undertaken in India to divert charity into proper channels and to take care of the most needy.

In the first instance, it is necessary to understand charity as it prevails amongst the masses and the middle classes. In almost all the cases, the giver and the receiver are both moved by impulse. The giver experiences a feeling of pity and sympathy for the poor, the depressed. The sympathy is translated into action and alms are given in terms of money or articles. The receiver in all cases is classed as poor, though very often economic poverty is caused by or accompanied with different types of handicap. The sympathy of the giver is enlisted by the receiver by demonstrating the nature of the handicap and its conse-

quences upon his own life. This is generally one phase, and an important phase of the beggar problem.

The intensity of the problem and even the nature of it differ regionally, but in almost all cases the considerations are the same. In science, the solution of a problem should be discovered and suggested in terms of the root-causes. A mere analysis will lead us into a futile controversy. It is difficult to find out whether the beggar class emerges first into the social arena, or whether there is in existence an army of givers who have a store of emotions which needs to be directed to those who are in need of sympathy. A solution can only be reached if action is directed towards both the giver and the receiver.

An average individual acts first and thinks afterwards; he may be excused if he allows his feelings and sentiments to lead him into action which gives him immediate relief and satisfaction without making him realise that it may cause social demoralisation, and injure the self-respect and personality of the recipients of his favour. It is well known that even persons who are capable of adequate reasoning and who *know* that chaotic philanthropy encourages public beggary and is socially harmful, *do* give charity in spite of this knowledge; their sentiments awe into silence their casual reasoning. Incessant and intensive public education is one of the fundamental remedies. The second remedy is a provision of substitute channels for the diversion of charity. It is, however, found that substitute channels only work when there is generally a fair level of intelligence amongst the class of donors. In the absence of this intelligence, the mere sight of the blind, the lame, the aged, the woman with the baby in arms, or the leper will open even the half-empty purse of the ordinary workman. Substitute channels unfortunately do not have the same appeal, and besides there is invariably a want of confidence on the part of the giver for help given by him which is not received directly by the afflicted.

However difficult this problem may be, much of the indiscriminate small public charity can be diverted into more useful channels if religion, which once promoted indiscriminate charity, comes to the aid of the newer methods of charity organization.

Religion, which once rightly extolled the feeling of giving and explained renunciation as an important form of spirituality, must now analyse its own previous injunction, and explain to the layman the real meaning of charity in terms of modern social organization and evolution. It is true that blessed are those who feed the hungry and clothe the naked, but thrice blessed are those who help to eliminate hunger and see to it that all who are in need, have their needs fulfilled in the same manner as their own needs are fulfilled. Religion, which once enjoined individual philanthropy, must now stand up for the establishment of social justice and for righting those wrongs that were caused by a virulent disorganization in the socio-economic structure of human society. With the establishment of even partial social justice and with the enforcement of equality of opportunity in the mundane world, the spiritual evolution of mankind is bound to progress a good deal.

The discussion of the bearing of religion on private philanthropy leads us into consideration of the religious mendicancy itself. In a country like India where both the major religions have extolled the 'sanyasi' and the 'fakir', beggary is bound to be looked upon as a noble form of spirituality. It is a privilege which merits Heaven to feed, clothe and house the man who pretends to have removed the *maya* of this earth in order to serve that unknown world in which the believer has unbounded faith. Such beliefs have encouraged the emergence in this country and other oriental countries of millions of religious mendicants who are daily fed, clothed and supplied with extravagant goods by the credulous and the unwary. Sacred temples have become the haunts of thousands of able-bodied and well-nourished human beings who renounce work and prey on the noble sentiments of charity and spirituality of the ignorant laity. This problem of religious mendicancy almost baffles a solution. It is fortunate that genuine and far-sighted leadership in the country in the fields of religion, society and politics have realised this grave menace which indirectly aids and abets the growth of another type of beggar class. It is obvious that a foreign government, or a government not entirely free of foreign domination, cannot

run the risk of tampering with a problem which may lead even to riots and disturbances, but perhaps the national government of the future, moved by a missionary zeal to solve some of our complicated problems that have baffled us and can only be dealt with by honest and fearless leadership, may, with firm and uncompromising legislative action, face this situation too.

As long as the beggar and the religious mendicant are part of a human society, it will be readily seen that methods other than private philanthropy will have to be applied as remedies. The beggar may be institutionalised or segregated. He may be detained in prison or looked after in a hospital, workhouse or almshouse. But these methods will not fail to rehabilitate and reclaim a large unfortunate section of the population. Measures of complete isolation and sterilisation of the unfit have been advocated, and they become imperative in certain extreme cases. But these are mere preventives, they do not suggest a cure. As long as poverty, want and unemployment continue to be rampant in human society, every effort should be made, even on a small scale, and perhaps in restricted areas, to plan the reclamation of the helpless. The beggar must be housed and healed ; he should be provided with employment so that he can earn his livelihood and live in dignity and self-respect. There should be a network of organisations, co-ordinated together, working according to plan on scientific lines to deal regionally with small beggar communities. It is unlikely that such organisations will not receive public sympathy and support ; and if they are backed by religious bodies, a good deal of uncontrolled charity which is going to waste, will be harnessed to the real benefit of the generally handicapped, leaving it to law to deal with that section which uses beggary as a shield and a tool for anti-social and criminal conduct.

Coming to a more intelligent type of charity where those who have sincerely desired to utilize their wealth for the genuine welfare of their fellowmen, it is felt that a good deal of such philanthropy can be organised to achieve human welfare on scientific lines. The needs of the church, the class and certain benevolent institutions attracted the sympathy and interest of the well-to-do

in the past. Even today communal, sectarian and religious charities thrive in many cases. The orphan, the sick, the destitute and the student benefit from these partially organised sectional charities. In such cases, too, what the giver gives indiscriminately is distributed unsystematically. Waste, overlapping, jobbery and even corruption enter into many badly organised charities which know not how to utilize their resources for the maximum good of the maximum number. Donors, seeking limelight, support causes which bring a halo to their names; they are not interested in maintaining and upholding efficient services for the intensive service of the poor. It may be added, however, that there are important exceptions to these mushroom organisations, societies and associations brought into being by mediocre and untrained leadership under high-sounding names and lofty aspirations.

The time has come however when the philanthropist has to be led, guided and helped, when the public has to be educated to discriminate between well-deserving and dubious causes, and when societies and associations have to be brought to the realisation that wise philanthropy and genuine service must yield results in terms of human welfare, happiness and progress.

A public body, organised by an individual or group of individuals, should demonstrate certain well-defined characteristics and qualities to deserve public sympathy and private aid. Its aims and objects should be clearly and precisely stated; a number of such bodies adequate in relation to the society's resources, should receive direct and tangible support. Selfless leadership, capable of thoughtful and consistent action, is as imperative for any useful organisation or institution, as efficient management and careful, watchful supervision. A sufficient number of useful and active workers who understand and appreciate the cause they serve, and who are in some manner trained for the work, are necessary to obtain satisfactory results for public philanthropy. The real success of these organisations, however, will only come if their activities and services are worked according to plan, and if scientific methods are employed to execute these plans in terms of concerted and persistent efforts. The finances of these bodies

should reveal careful investment of funds in useful activities and avoidance of waste and heavy administrative costs.

In a country like India where population is large and badly housed, the standard of health low, illiteracy extensive, the woman suffering from various handicaps and the child neglected, public and organised efforts should be directed towards the restoration of a sane social life. The investment of money in this direction will be the most useful and helpful charity. Human environment plays an important role in the direction of social evolution and progress. The environment helps to develop talents and character, and a healthy environment will greatly stimulate efficiency in every aspect of life. A planned physical environment will facilitate the birth of various types of social welfare activities. Both in the city and in the village housing planned on a co-operative basis under public initiative will pave the way for Municipal and State action on a larger scale. The investment of charity in housing projects will contribute much towards greater human happiness, better health and improved social relations and social organisation.

In the realm of education, however meagre the educational facilities provided by the local government and the state, public charity should reserve its interest for pre-school training and adult education. The creation of Infant Schools, Nursery Schools or Montessori Schools or even partial provision for the care of pre-school children will improve the prospects of education in the later stages. The foundation of life is laid in the earliest years, and the provision of proper environment, sufficient and wholesome food, basic training and adequate play will create a healthy generation for the future. Both in the village and in the slum, pre-schools are a neglected amenity for childhood.

Adult education is very much needed, especially for parents and workers, who never had the opportunity for any kind of education in their childhood. Adult education is a kind of activity which can be easily undertaken by voluntary effort backed by public sympathy and charity. There is an urgent need to create a National Adult Education Society to direct and plan adult education in all its aspects, and local adult education

centres can be left to the care of local organisations manned by local volunteers and backed by local charity.

Public effort and private philanthropy should also be directed towards the preservation of health and the prevention of disease. The creation of Health Centres in our country has been almost completely neglected. The provision of outdoor life, playgrounds and sports and athletics will go a long way towards the creation of a healthier and a more energetic population. Whilst private philanthropy may provide these amenities on a club, sectional or sectarian basis, the Municipality and the State ought to look to the provision of these for larger numbers. Municipalities may even take advantage of private philanthropy to advance the cause of health of the general public. As in the case of Adult Education, a Playground Movement or a Physical Welfare Movement organised on a national basis, backed by private charity and philanthropy in local areas, is necessary in any scheme of national reconstruction.

The maintenance of the poor is a serious problem, and in our country where the majority of the population is a victim of chronic poverty, a solution can only be attempted for the benefit of small numbers and sectional communities. Efforts have especially been made in communities, castes and social groups in which the majority enjoy a higher standard of life. Private philanthropy should give every possible encouragement to any systematic or scientific attempt to relieve poverty and its consequences. Efforts for the complete rehabilitation of the poor should be made by any intelligent community that is capable of reazlising the importance of preserving social health and taking active measures against the slow demoralisation and deterioration of a part of itself which is eventually bound to react on it or the community as a whole. The employment of trained social workers by private individuals and public associations to carry out Family Case Work amongst the victims of poverty is one of the most effective forms of utilising private charity and philanthropy. Family Case Work is recognised in the civilized world as the highest form of social service. It is also the most difficult type of social work which can be done only by trained, ex-

perienced and mature social workers, well-versed in the knowledge of social sciences, especially individual and group psychology, family problems and the treatment of every aspect of the poverty problem. Any institution, association or public body catering to the poor ought to be able to pay for the services of full-time qualified workers who will be able to do more for the relief of the poor and eradication of poverty than any of the half-hearted palliatives, like doles, distribution of food grains and clothes, relief for rent etc., which eventually render the problem more complex for solution. If private philanthropy can come to the help of associations which serve the poor, it will enable them to render more effective aid than hitherto.

The present war, with all its evil consequences, is augmenting considerably the private wealth of a large number of individuals, business firms and organizations. When private wealth is thus increased, it is but natural that a part of it will be utilised by well-meaning and intelligent philanthropists for the benefit of their fellow-men. The utilisation of the surplus wealth of individuals and the utilisation of money put at the disposal of handicapped and needy human groups requires to be properly directed and invested so as to make charity yield the maximum of human welfare. It is usual for wealthy philanthropists to give a part of their wealth as endowments to be managed by Trustees. The aims and objects of the Trust are usually determined by the needs of groups at a given period, and as Trusts have a premanent existence, considerable difficulties arise years later when the Articles of the Trust remain fairly operative whilst the direction in which the Trust money has to be used requires to be changed due to circumstances.

In the making of Trusts, the help of lawyers is not enough. It is essential for philanthropists to consult institutions like the Charity Organisation Societies that exist all over Europe and America, but are unfortunately not known to this country. This Charity Organisation Movement, briefly known as the C.O.S., which began in the middle of the 19th century, has rendered the greatest help in Western countries in the efficient organisation and management of private charities. It took almost a hundred

years for the C.O.S. to come into its own. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, a society for bettering the conditions of the poor came into existence under the leadership of men like William Wilberforce, Thomas Barnard, M. Eliot and others. After more than half a century, the Society gathered strength. John Ruskin and Octavia Hill joined it. And the C.O.S. Movement took root both in England and in America, and in various forms existed throughout the Continent.

The task of the C.O.S. was the task of leadership in the field of philanthropy. It attempted to educate charity societies by suggestion and example. The C.O.S. suggested the nationalisation and consolidation of charities and desired to organise charity by legislation and social action. It published voluminous literature on the problem of poverty and the ways of charity. It raised social services to the level of a profession. Some action on the lines of the C.O.S. Movement has already been taken in India. Here and there Charity Organisation Societies have come into existence, mainly to serve small sections of people. The government too has acted to a small extent under the pressure of public opinion, and registration of charities and the supervision of accounts, however partial, have been undertaken. It is unfortunate that no effort has yet been made to work the real aims and principles of the C.O.S. Movement. Hardly any lead has been given to the philanthropists, loose and independent actions of societies with narrow outlooks have not been co-ordinated, persons who manage charity have not yet been even brought together, let alone the larger purpose of educating them in the scientific methods of charity management.

India is a vast country, and the existence of many communities and the caste system comes in the way of any effort to organise charity on a national basis. To give charity for the benefit of one's own caste or community can be understood and appreciated, but a wider outlook for a broad-based philanthropy has to be gradually created. Moreover, sectional and communal groups, whilst continuing to serve their own interests, can come together for common purposes, for the promotion of common objects. There is an urgent need to educate public

opinion with regard to the investment of money in charity for the promotion of public welfare and for suggesting better methods of management of charities.

As the social consciousness continues to awaken in this country, there is a greater desire to see that charity serves a far greater purpose than providing temporary satisfaction to the giver and the receiver. The need is felt for a greater understanding of the human problem and its solution by better understanding and co-operation between the public, the philanthropist and the government. The task is not an easy one. The emotional forces that urge the large masses to sacrifice and contribute their mite towards the well-being of their fellowmen should be given a direction and insistent education must create public opinion in favour of wise and discreet giving. Leaders and workers inspired by the mission of aid to their fellowmen must come together to formulate with care and precision their aims and ideals, and work together with efficiency and organisation to achieve those aims. The philanthropist, endowed with wealth, must be guided by the State and organised charity to invest his wealth in causes which are worthwhile and which will aid in the eradication of want and poverty, and the encouragement of self-sufficiency and self-respect. The road is a long one. and India is only on the threshold of attempting to organise and regulate fundamental individual and social forces which have since time immemorial contributed to the well-being and service of the human and the sub-human kingdoms.

9

A SCHEME FOR TACKLING THE BEGGAR PROBLEM

Although this Scheme deals specifically with the problem of beggar control in the City of Bombay, it can serve as a basis for similar schemes in other parts of India, for the problem is, more or less, similar everywhere. In drawing up this comprehensive Scheme, Dr. Balsara's main idea has been to devise various types of institutions needed and to co-ordinate their activities with other existing agencies in the City which can render help or useful co-operation in the rehabilitation of beggars.

PART 1

PRELIMINARY SURVEY—NUMBERS—LEGISLATION

THE difficult problem of beggars in the City of Bombay has been under discussion for over 36 years. It has agitated the public mind, the Municipal Corporation and the Provincial Government from time to time. It still awaits a studied, serious and systematic handling, let alone a solution. I shall not go here into the various theoretical aspects of the problem of beggary from the standpoint of its effects on society, society's responsibility for it, its economic and sociological causes, its nuisance value, its influence on public health, the injury to social conscience and the encouragement of social

vices through its long tolerance and such other questions associated with the vast problem of nearly 14 to 29 lacs[1] of beggars and religious mendicants in the country as a whole. Nor would I like to go into the controversy of determining the relative responsibility of the four sections of Indian society, viz., the public, the civic administration, the Provincial and Central Governments for solving the problem. It would suffice for my purpose to say that none of the above four sections can or should singly handle or attempt to solve the problem, that their close cooperation will be necessary at every stage and that the ultimate control and major financing of the movement and machinery for the tackling of the beggar problem should rest with the Provincial and the Local Governments as has been the case in all the countries of the West where this problem has been systematically handled.

The Need of Co-operation Between the General Public and Local and Provincial Governments in Handling the Problem of Beggars.—Most of the civilized countries of the world have long prohibited begging in public and declared it an offence under the law, whereas England began her Poor Law Relief as early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Japan has enacted social laws to care for her aged and infirm in State and Municipal Homes and begging in Japan is as scarce as in countries like Great Britain and Germany. But beggars still stalk the streets of China, India, Moslem and other countries of the Near, Middle and Far East and even some of the smaller eastern European States, though all have realised the fact that the beggar problem can never be solved by private charity, however profuse, and that state intervention and legislation are necessary if the allied problems of begging, destitution and vagrancy are to be effectively tackled. In fact, private charity without organised, well discriminated and institutionalised distribution of relief, has, more often than not, led to the intensification of the evil it has tried to relieve or eradicate, and that is exactly what has happened in India and some Moslem countries, where giving alms to all and sundry,

1 Census Report of 1931 and 1921 respectively.

infirm and able-bodied, deserving and otherwise, has been particularly extolled as a virtue and an act of piety and godliness.

In the city itself and even in the country as a whole, attempts at the handling of the Beggar Problem have been or are being made either by actual or proposed legislation in the following cities and states: Madras, Colombo, Hyderabad (Deccan), Calcutta, Lucknow, Mysore, Bangalore, Karachi, Nagpur and Bombay. Public opinion is gradually gathering strength against the social and sanitary evils of begging, and right-minded people have been clamouring for a systematic handling of the beggar problem. Under the stress of soaring prices and scarcity of foodstuffs, and more particularly the difficulty of rationing for the homeless and the vagrant, the time seems propitious for such an organised effort. It is, therefore, suggested that the public, the civic administration and Government make an earnest effort to tackle this problem, which, though of too long a duration to frighten the organisers, is not so insoluble or vast as not to yield to a really serious effort. It is in the hope of showing to some extent the fair possibility of the problem being successfully tackled that the Scheme has been worked out in some detail, though, it is offered only as a tentative one and with no claim of finality or infallibility about it. Its outline for other cities will vary according to local circumstances and the existence or otherwise of suitable institutions.

Juvenile Beggar and Religious Mendicant not Our Concern in this Scheme.—I shall not deal here with the question of the *juvenile beggar* under 16, as that problem is being already dealt with by a separate enactment (Children Act of 1924) and a relevant Society (Children's Aid Society) in Bombay as well as in other cities, and appropriate cases should be referred to the proper quarters if brought to the notice of the police or other authorised agents empowered to deal with adult male and female beggars. Nor shall I deal with the much larger and somewhat more difficult question of *religious mendicants*, or Fakirs and Sadhus, who do not openly beg in streets or from the general public but in the

precincts or close neighbourhood of temples and mosques.

Enactment of Proper Legislation a Pre-requisite.—I shall not deal here with the detailed legislation or enactment of the proposed *Act for the Prevention of Begging* beyond pointing out that the first pre-requisite of the scheme detailed below is adequate and proper legislation, empowering the police and other authorised agents to arrest and remand the beggars detected in the act of begging to a Home or Centre, to be kept there for shorter or longer periods, ranging from a few days to 3 to 12 months or longer as found necessary according to the nature of individual cases.[1] This legislative enactment is necessary because the existing police powers under the City Police Act, Municipal Acts or the Indian Penal Code are utterly inadequate to enable the police authorities to handle the beggars. But the legislation need not be very elaborate and can be based on the various enactments that are already on the Statute Book in Calcutta, Madras, Colombo, Hyderabad and Lucknow. A tentative draft can be prepared by some one and then handed over to a committee of 3 lawyers and 3 or 4 laymen (including women) to be put into proper shape, varying according to local conditions.

The Approximate Number of Beggars in the City.—Coming straight to the Scheme, one would like to know the magnitude of the problem in the City of Bombay, so that one may have some idea of the approximate financial liability involved at the end of one to five years. It is a matter of surprise that no reliable figures of the number of beggars in the City, systematically classified, are available. The figures available, such as they are, are however given below :—

1911—The Census Report of 1911 gives the mendicant population of the City of Bombay inclusive of " beggars, vagrants, procurers, prostitutes, receivers of stolen goods, cattle poisoners " belonging to all religions and inclusive of religious beggars at **11,069**, of whom 5,728 were adult males, 3,664 adult females

1. For the subject of legislation, see relevant chapter in this Book.

and 1,678 dependants. Of these 7,426 were Hindus and 3,195 Muslims and the remaining belonged to other denominations. These figures naturally give us little idea of our real problem of secular beggars. (*Vide* Census Report—Vol. III, Bombay—Parts I & II—p. 88.) In the same year the Census Report gives the figures of beggars in **Calcutta** and its suburbs at **5,624** of whom only 1,283 or less than 25% were born in Calcutta.

1921—The Census Report gives the following figures :—

	Hindus				Muslims				Grand total
	Male	Female	Depen-dants	Total	Male	Female	Depen-dants	Total	
Beggars & Vagrants	3,163	1,030	542	4,735	1,234	301	235	1,770	6,505

(*Vide* Vol. IX, Part II, Tables, p. lxxviii.)

1931—The Census Report gives the total beggar population without any attempt at detailed classification as **5,025** out of a total city population of 11,61,383, which gives an incidence of **4.3** per 1,000—after Lahore the highest incidence among 7 of the larger cities of India, **Calcutta** figures of **3,266** in the same year considered not reliable. Of these 5,025, males form 3,821 and females 1,193, there being 11 more working dependants. (*Vide* Vol. IX, Part II, p. 199.)

1941—After considerable discussion and effort and a special attempt at rounding up beggars from the streets in the city, but during a rather wrong and awkward period of 8 to 12 at night, the Census of 1941 produced the surprising figure of beggars in the precincts of the city at 1,771 on the night of 28-2-41, 1,335 males and 436 females—not a reliable figure apart from the defects in the method and hours of rounding up, interrogation, etc.

1943—The Census of the "Homeless"—which description

or designation is not necessarily co-terminous with "beggars"—carried out for the purposes of rationing by rounding up the persons in the streets during daylight, gave the following figures :—

Adults	8,179
Children over 2 and under 12	1,825
Children under 2	118
Persons enumerated ...	10,122

No Reliable Figures of Secular Beggars in the City yet Available. The Estimate of the Sethna Committee.—Thus we find that we have no reliable census of secular beggars taken in recent years on which to base our forecast of the magnitude of the problem for solution and our estimate of the approximate establishment, equipment and expenditure we may need. The Committee for Prevention of Professoinal Beggary appointed by Government Resolution No. 3020 of 26-3-1918 to consider and formulate proposals for the prevention of professional begging also bemoaned the lack of reliable figures and obtained some statistics from District Officers, which, the Committee said, "though they cannot be regarded as perfectly accurate, can safely be treated as making the nearest approach to accuracy for practical purposes." These figures they gave as follows (p. 15 of the Committee's Report) :-

Area	Population	Population of Beggars		Total
		Adults	Juvenile	
(a) Bombay City ...	9,79,445	4,000	1,000	5,000
(b) 26 Districts in the Presidency ...	1,86,47,032	30,865†	14,020*x*	44,885 × 10,972*
	1,96,26,477			60,857

The Committee estimated that the ratio of juvenile to adult beggars worked out at about 30% to 70%, and the *juvenile* and *infirm* together formed half of the adult able-bodied beg-

† For 20 districts. * Approximate figure for 6 districts.

gar population, *i.e.*, in the ratio of 1 to 2 (20,000 and 40,000 respectively in the Bombay province). The infirm alone they computed at about 8% of the total, *i.e.*, about 5,000 in the whole province.

Figures According to the Special Census of Beggars in 1921.—Mr. O. H. B. Starte, who was specially appointed to make a further report and draw up a scheme for the tackling of the beggar problem in the City of Bombay, gives figures of beggars in the City obtained from 'a *special census* taken by the Corporation on 6-11-1921', the total number of religious and secular mendicants enumerated being **6,883**[1] of whom **4,912** were secular and 1,971 Fakirs and Sadhus. Some useful particulars about age, sex and physical condition of the secular and religious mendicants were as follows :—

	Secular			Religious			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1. Able-bodied aged 16 and above ...	1,246	737	1,983	1,413	155	1,538	3,581
2. Those suffering from disabling infirmities and aged 16 and above ...	...	...	1,382	...	...	373	1,755
3. Able-bodied below 16 years of age ...	...	...	1,456	...	...	...	1,456
. Those suffering from disabling infirmities and below 16 years of age ...	...	...	91	...	...	...	91
							6,883

As we are not concerned in this Scheme with the religious mendicants and juveniles as already stated above, we have to consider the above figures of able-bodied adult beggars of 1,246 males and 737 females and of the 1,382 infirm, or a total of **3,365.**[2]

1 This comes very near the figure of 6,505 according to the Census of 1921.

2 In the recent Rationing Census, the 'homeless' were counted at 8,179 adults and 1,825 children under 12. The enumerators stated that about 30 to 40% of these may be beggars which would give a figure of beggars at approximately 3,272 adults or 4,000 inclusive of children i.e., 40% of the total. But according to the enumerators, those suffering from disabling infirmities would not be more than 3 to 5% i.e., 300 to 500 out of the total homeless of 10,122, whereas 7 to 8% more may be suffering from curable skin diseases. (In 1936 in Calcutta the number of beggars was estimated at 4,000 of whom 2,000 were estimated to be able-bodied, 1,000 lepers, 400 blind and 600 suffering from other diseases.)

A Good Number Of Able-bodied Beggars will make Themselves Scarce no Sooner the Prevention of Begging Act is put into Force.—Now whatever the figure of able-bodied and infirm adult secular beggars may be in the city, it must be stated at the outset that as soon as legislation to arrest and remand them is introduced, a very substantial percentage will either turn to work, cease begging, leave the city, repair to and live with relatives or will be rendered liable for deportation.[1] This has been the experience the world over and also in Indian cities whenever such legislation has been introduced and its provisions put into force. It would not be advisable, therefore, to make provision in our scheme straight away for very large numbers or even to build *pucca* structures for accommodating a large number of either able-bodied or infirm beggars. Besides, at present there will be the added difficulty of obtaining building materials for a year or two to come. The scheme must, therefore, be deliberately conceived on a modest scale to start with, with proposals to utilise existing structures or institutions as far as available and to put up *kutcha*, cheaper structures somewhat on the lines of village huts, though built on sanitary plans, if further living or lodging accommodation is required.

Caution in Expenditure Necessary Because of the Experimental Nature of the Measures in the Initial Stages of the Scheme.—The first beginnings of the handling of this difficult problem of rehabilitating beggars in such large numbers as in the entire Province must inevitably be on an experimental basis, and it would be less costly and wasteful in the long run if houses, structures, institutions and settlements are not located and erected on a basis of finality and for the full number of persons known or estimated to come under this scheme. This caution is very necessary in view of the subsequent complications and difficulties arising and waste occurring among numerous social institutions

1 The beggar community comprises a motley crowd in any city and all do not beg out of necessity. A large member will not relish institutionalisation. So the following types will soon fade away from the city, thus leaving a much smaller number of really needy beggars to be called for under the legislation, viz., (a) the *professional* able-bodied male and female beggars; (b) those who are otherwise employed but supplement their income by begging; (c) the wives and children of those male casual workers, who allow the former to earn by begging because of economic stress or urban demoralisation; (d) those who organise begging and live on their wits and (e) the juvenile beggars who have been away from home and taken to begging when not gainfully employed otherwise.

owing to hurried planning, lack of provision for change, expansion or adaptation and the cocksureness of the organisers about their initial plans, aims, objects and ideals, all put up with a touch of finality as if nothing therein will need the slightest change. No such finality is claimed for this tentative and experimental scheme and it should be thrashed out in every detail by persons who have thought about or possess experience of like schemes or institutions. It only indicates in somewhat broad outlines one way in which the problem can be handled.

Some Considerations Regarding Legislation.—We have already stated that we are not concerned in this scheme with the question of legislation, which should be taken up by a Committee of 5 to 7 lawyers and laymen, who should use the existing legislation in other provinces and some tentative draft for guidance and draft a Bill to suit the needs of the particular City with which they are concerned. The enactment should properly differentiate between the secular and religious beggar or mendicant and leave the latter out of its purview at least in the early stages of handling the beggar problem in order to avoid unnecessary complications and possible opposition on religious grounds.[1] However, it may be provided that while religious mendicants may be allowed in the precincts of a religious house like a temple, mosque or church, they should under no circumstances be allowed to beg on any public roads, streets, or premises or from the public in general, if they do; they must be brought within the purview of the Act for the Prevention of Begging in the City. Even as regards allowing them to beg within the precincts of religious institutions, they should do so with the express permission of the owners or trustees of the institution, and if the latter object, the beggars or mendicants will have to cease begging or otherwise they should be dealt with as ordinary beggars under the proposed Act. In this connection the attention of those entrusted with the drafting of the Bill may be drawn to some of the recommendations regarding

1 The religious aspect of mendicancy has been very elaborately treated with relevant citations from scriptural texts and opinions of religious savants and dignitories by the Sethna Committee (Bombay) and the Committee appointed by the Mysore Government. (*Vide* their respective Reports).

definitions, etc., in the Sethna Committee's Report, (Chapter VII, paragraph 37, p. 16), and in Mr. Starte's Report (Paragraphs 16-18, pp. 7-9), which deal with the important questions of religious and secular beggars, how far begging in the public should be made a punishable offence, etc.

PART II

INSTITUTIONS NEEDED—THEIR WORKING

Magistrate to Remand Every Case to the Shelter for Keeping Identificatory Evidence.—Let us suppose that adequate legislation has been framed and passed and the police and other authorised agents[1] have begun their work of arresting beggars as accommodation and funds permit, and placing them before the magistrate for trial and remand if they come within the cognizance of law. As the magistrate will be hearing evidence adduced by the police or the arresting agent and the offender himself as well as witnesses, if any, he will be in a position to judge whether he should release the offender if it is his first offence and he or his relatives or friends give an assurance that he will not beg any more. In order, however, to facilitate identification on a second arrest of the same person, the police should keep an adequate record of the particulars, photograph and thumb impression of the offender and send them to the remand home or *Shelter* for filing, or if this is not possible, the magistrate may remand every offender convicted of the offence of begging to the Shelter with a writ that he is to be released on the above formalities being completed.

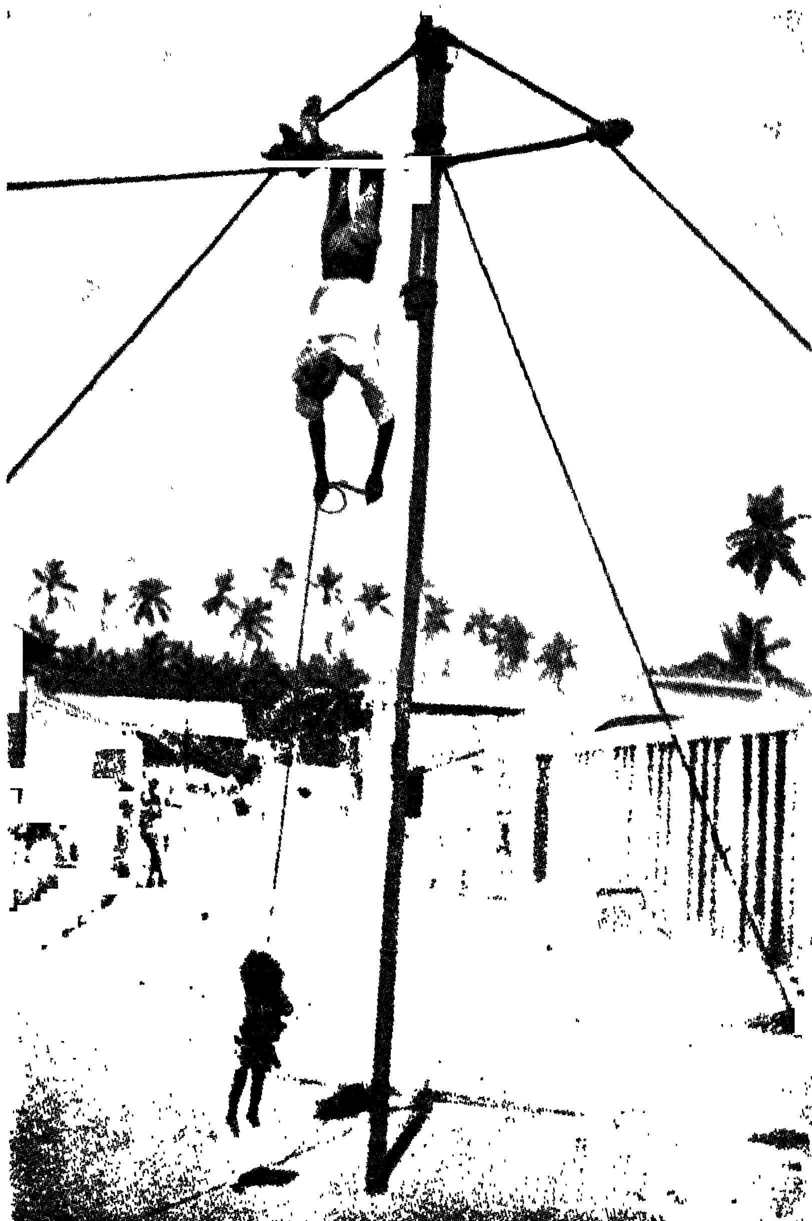
DISCRETION for Release to be Allowed to the Shelter Supervisor.—If the magistrate is not convinced of the *bona-fides* of the offender that he will not resort to begging again or if there is none to give a guarantee on the offender's behalf, he will naturally pass a Reception Order sending him to the remand home or

1 As the police are generally busy with so much other work, are transferred from section to section and are not always available at the places where they may be most needed at certain times of the day, it would be advisable to arm some employees of the Shelter or Management Committee—called Agents for the purpose—with police powers to go round the City and arrest beggars found in the act of begging and committing a breach of the Act. These Agents must, however, be appointed on a temporary term of 1 to 3 years in the first instance, for their retention may become unnecessary in course of time.



DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

Probably Diwali Celebrations would not be complete, unless you meet this sight. Visit the temples and you will see yourself hemmed in all sides by the beggars.



Exploitation of the child

Shelter to be detained there for a shorter or longer period according to the exigencies of each case. Now the *maximum period* of detention on first offence, (which may be three months), should only be mentioned by the trying magistrate and the release of the offender at any time during that period should be left to the discretion of the officer in charge (whom we may call the *Shelter Supervisor*), as it is possible that some developments may take place soon after the remand; besides, begging is not an offence against society or a crime on the same level as other heinous offences, and the beggar should not therefore be treated unduly harshly for the first offence and particularly so in the early stages of the experiment of the legislation. The Supervisor of the Shelter or his subordinate officers will be in a much better position to find out the attitude and temperament of the first offender in the quiet, persuasive atmosphere of the Shelter and judge whether the offender should be released with some help or advice immediately, or on being assured that he or his relatives or friends are able to take care of him, and he need not be kept any longer at the Shelter. These preliminary remarks are necessary here because, if the Committee agrees, these provisions will have to be suitably incorporated in properly-framed legislation.

Naming of the Remand Home and Other Institutions in Connection with the Scheme of Beggar Rehabilitation.—Now a word about the conception of the Shelter or remand home and the spirit of rehabilitation that should pervade it. It is understood that the ultimate idea of the removal of beggars from the streets and prohibition of begging and vagrancy is not merely to punish the beggar, who may be one, not always because of his own fault but because of many social, economic and other forces or circumstances often beyond his control. *We would put down the prime purpose of legislation to be to reclaim and rehabilitate the fortunate beggar as far as it is possible to do so.* If that be the aim, care should be taken in the naming of the institutions and designating the personnel that are brought into being for the handling of this problem. We attach some importance to nomenclature in such a social scheme as the above,

because if there is a derogatory meaning attached to the words, names or terminology applied or used, the stigma sticks to the inmates, influences their behaviour and is difficult to eradicate once society at large gets used to the ideas associated with the name or names of the institutions. As the word '*beggar*' like so many others, has come to have considerable odium and condemnation attached to it, we should avoid naming our institutions with that or a similar word. This will help us in rehabilitating the beggars; otherwise, it will create a handicap in finding such people any regular employment even after rehabilitation. With this idea I have suggested all along a certain inoffensive terminology or nomenclature for various homes, institutions and officials, which, however, may be substituted with more suitable names as available or considered desirable.

Necessity of a Home or Shelter in the City.—Now as beggars are gradually arrested and produced before the magistrates, they may first be in larger numbers but later on they may be very few. As soon as the order for remand or reception has been made, they will have to be taken to a home and, therefore, a building for housing about 40 to 50 persons including men, women and children, according to the proportion or extent of beggar infestation in each city, will be required in a fairly central or easily accessible locality in the city. As regards Bombay, if arrangements could be arrived at with the *King George V Memorial Infirmary and Lady Dhunbai Home for Destitutes* at Haines Road, (Mahaluxmi), to house these remanded persons, it would be very helpful and economical. Otherwise, if an Improvement Trust or Municipal or Government chawl, somewhat detached from others, is made available, it may temporarily serve the purpose. This building will have to have halls or dormitories for males and females and a few rooms in case there are whole families with children to be accommodated. Two or three detached rooms will be required for the infirm, the defective and those suffering from contagious diseases. Such a place may be called the *Shelter* (आश्रय) to which the beggars may be sent on conviction.

The Purpose of the Shelter: Sorting of the Beggars.—The

Shelter will be a place for receiving and sorting out the beggars. Those who would like to return to their relatives will be sent back to them after due inquiry and on the *Supervisor* being satisfied that the person or persons can be trusted or allowed to go. The Supervisor will have to be authorised to spend some limited amount on repatriation of such beggars.

There will be the following types of persons to be sorted out :—

(a) Able-bodied, single, unattached adult males.
(b) Able-bodied, single, unattached adult females.
(c) Man and wife.
(d) Man and woman.
(e) Man, wife and children (man, woman and children should be put in the same category as the last).
(f) Defective, Diseased, Disabled or Infirm.

These six classes of persons will have to be dealt with differently according to the special requirements of each case. I would suggest that the affairs of the Shelter should not be made too complicated, and generally the inmates should not be allowed to remain in the Shelter more than a few days except in exceptional circumstances. It should act more or less as a *Reception and Clearing House.*

Distribution to Communal Homes or Institutions if such Exist.—Now, soon after the inmates are in the Shelter, having completed the preliminary recording of their particulars, preparing identification cards with photographs, etc., the Supervisor will have to sort out the inmates with a view to directing them to respective institutions for keep, work, training or treatment. It may here be suggested that the Shelter must keep a complete list of communal and other institutions that have been established in the city with a view to taking care of the down-and-outs or stranded members of different communities. Thus Shelters, Dharmashālās or Homes will be found in the city for the destitute of all communities like the Sir Jamshetjee Jejeebhoy Dharmashālā of the District Benevolent Society at Bellasis-Ripon Road, like the Seth F. S. Paruk Dharmashālā at Hughes-Babulnath Road for the Parsis, managed by the Parsi Punchayet

Trustees, King Edward Home at Ripon Road managed by the Salvation Army and the European Relief Association for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, Saraswat Deen Vatsal Sangh, Bombay 4, for Saraswats. Wherever such homes or shelters exist for the members of any community, it would be desirable, after the preliminaries of record, etc., have been completed, to direct by mutual arrangement such persons to the respective types of institutions so that the responsibility of the Shelter may be lessened to that extent. To this end the Shelter Supervisor must keep up-to-date information about the existence or establishment of such homes, shelters or institutions in the City. Except for the above and those who have to be repatriated to their family or relatives, each remaining class or type of beggar will have to be treated differently, and we will discuss them below separately.

Industrial Home for the Training of the Able-bodied. - Taking now the first five classes of beggars, all the able-bodied adult males and females will need a separate Home or institution, as the majority of them may be largely unskilled and would need to be given some training for work or taught some trade if they have nowhere to go to. Releasing them to the wide world without friends, influence or resources, after a remand at the Shelter, will only force them again on the streets and perhaps to more cunning or clandestine forms of begging or to thieving as it happens in the case of a large number of convicts on their release from imprisonment. Those of the able-bodied men and women on the first and second remand, who express their willingness to do any work given them but are not in a position to find it, may be found some work; and if no work is immediately available for them, they will have to be given some training for some skilled or semi-skilled work or trade, for which they may be kept for at least 3 months in an institution called the *Industrial Home* (उद्योग भवन). This may be situated either in or on the outskrits of the city. The structure may be quite simple and even if they are sheds of bamboo-matting walls and leak-proof *zavli* roofing with a raised plinth to keep off rain-water flooding the interior and built on sanitary

principles, they will admirably serve the purpose of providing residential accommodation separately for men and women, and some covered space for simple industrial training in easy arts and crafts. The sheds or camps for men and women may be separate, but they can be in the same compound or enclosure, so that both may get advantage of the general industrial lay-out. The easier or lighter operations and processes may be worked by the women as suited to their fingers and ability, and the heavier or more arduous operations may be done by men.[1]

Employment First in Skilled or Unskilled Work in the City.—Training in industrial skill or technique takes time and it is easier to get it at an early stage in life. After idling one's life in begging, skilled work may not come easily to one's fingers or appeal to one's heart and so we must strive to procure as much unskilled work as possible for these men and women after giving them some *training in disciplined life* at the Industrial Home, say from 1 to 3 months or more in the case of a second remand according to the exigencies of each individual case. Here it may be stated that though the city attracts its beggars from the town and village, the hardened beggars may have become so used to city life and conditions that a large section of them, who have no homes to go to, will find themselves at sea in their small town or village and may prefer to stay in the city and find work there. Besides, it would be easier in the early part of the scheme to find work for beggars in cities with their much larger possibilities of employment in industry than to establish

1 Since the above note was prepared, I have seen the Evacuation Camp at Chembur (about 10 miles from Bombay) and I believe it will conveniently suit the purpose for lodging able-bodied beggars with an Industrial Home for about 300 and an Infirmary for those defective and diseased or maimed cases who do not need much medical attention. The sheds are well-built and will last for some years, except that the *zavli* roofing will have to be repaired and replaced every two years and privies on the basket system will have to be provided as slit trenches will not do for a permanent settlement and will not be hygienic especially in the monsoon. This will have the initial expenditure of Rs. 30,000 to 60,000 on structures. The 13 sheds can easily accommodate about 500 inmates, in addition to providing room for weaving and other industrial purposes.

There is a charitable dispensary nearby with a doctor in charge residing on the premises, who will be of great help to the staff as well as inmates. There are also a School, Library, Post Office and Police Post only a hundred feet away on the opposite side of the dividing road, and electric current can be tapped on the spot from the overhead Mains. The Chembur station is at a distance of about ½ mile and there is a regular bus service to the Sion Station on the G.I.P. Rly. There are 2 big wells in the Camp and the Tulsi and Vihar water pipe lines are situated at a distance of ¾ mile from the Camp and can be tapped if more water is needed for the Industrial Home and Infirmary. There is ample Government land in the neighbourhood for future development. A compound wall, or enclosure will have to be erected to prevent the inmates from absconding.

agricultural or other such colonies in undeveloped rural or forest areas, which require different qualities from those the demoralised type of beggars may be expected to possess. Pioneer agricultural colonies or settlements in forest areas or new clearings, besides, require a high type of leadership and a fairly homogeneous group of the first batches of settlers which will not be so easy to procure among our variously handicapped population. The idea of having *Agri-horticultural or Agrico-industrial Colonies or Settlements* should therefore come at a much later stage after considerable experience of the variegated beggar population as well as of the working of the institutions proposed here has been obtained.[1] We must not expect miracles of self-reliance and uplift from the beggars, as it may also be well not to start with the error of under-estimating the capacity of the once fallen and handicapped to adjust themselves to new conditions, or altogether discount the latent recuperative powers of human beings to pull themselves together and effect self-improvement under congenial atmosphere, kindly support, guidance and encouragement.

Training in Textile Industry. Coming then to a survey of possible work for the able-bodied beggars in the city, the Textile Industry is the largest in Bombay and elastic enough to absorb from 1 to 2 lacs of male and female workers. Whereas it has many departments requiring skilled and therefore trained workers, it can also take several semi-skilled and unskilled workers, both men and women. It would therefore be advantageous to have at the Industrial Home a *Textile Department* with simple spinning on a good charkha and weaving on hand and treadle looms, and for purposes of demonstration or actual work a power loom with dobbie arrangements may also be introduced. This will help in the production of much-needed cloth for the clothing of the inmates of the various institutions and the inferior staff employed thereat, killing two birds with one stone. Further, the intending worker, man or woman, will be trained up, *inter alia*, in an atmosphere of spinning, weaving and ancillary operations

1 *Vide* Appendix II for the possibilities of dairying and agri-horticulture at Chembur.

and will not find himself or herself lost in the vastness of a Textile Mill when transplanted there suddenly after a long life of practically doing nothing beyond using his tongue or wits. Besides such practical training, the workers should also be given simple lessons in *discipline, good behaviour, honest dealings, enthusiasm for work* and *personal cleanliness* and *sanitation*, so that when sent out, they may be accepted willingly by the employers rather than refused work in their concerns because they had a somewhat degenerate past and come from an atmosphere of social stigma.

This aspect of creating a good impression about the workers sent out from the Home needs to be emphasised, for, once the Home gets a bad name with regard to the inmates' honesty or willingness to work, it will find it difficult to place them for employment. They must also be fed well at the Home and their health should be improved, so that they may be able to do the hard work expected of them.

Employment in Textile Mills.- There are about 65 to 70 Textile Mills in the city and suburbs and the Mill-Owners' Association and individual proprietors may be requested to admit from 10 to 20 workers each daily (on the basis of about 1% of their total employing capacity) on unskilled or semi-skilled work in their mills, giving them whatever wages they give to others, so that there may be no distinction made between the inmates of the Home and other workers. This will solve by far the most difficult problem of placing our able-bodied men and women in useful and profitable employment. The male and female members of the so-called Criminal Tribes Settlement near Sholapur are given employment in the textile mills in the city and the mills seem to have had no particular difficulty with them. The mills in Bombay, if properly approached, may be able to give employment to a very large number of our able-bodied inmate population of the Industrial Home.

Accommodation for the Employed Men in the City, if Necessary. -After such employment, the men and women may be allowed to remain in the Home for some time if they choose to

be there on payment for their food, and if they desire to leave and find their own lodgings they may be allowed to do so. If, however, on account of the acute shortage of housing in the city, they are not able to find residential accommodation, the officials of the Home should try to find it for them through the Municipality or Government or some other Agency. If by experience, it is considered desirable to maintain an *After-Care Home* or *Lodgings* for such working inmates of the Home, the same may be done with a view to make such a Home or Lodgings *self-supporting* as far as possible.[1]

Other Avenues of Employment—Building Trade.—It would not, however, do to lay all one's eggs in one basket, and we must keep in view other avenues of skilled and semi-skilled and unskilled employment for the able-bodied men and women from among the beggar population. In normal times the *Building Trade* would offer some scope for unskilled workers of both sexes and the Committee of Management may get into touch with larger Building Contractors in the city, the Municipality and the Public Works Department of the Provincial Government with a view to secure a few score or hundred places for our inmates on the works carried out in or outside the city. If the works are outside the city, the inmates can be sent there in batches of 15 to 20 or more with some organisation of their own for purposes of discipline under a Mukadum or Headman, so that their living, feeding and other arrangements may be made with the mutual co-operation of all, as is inevitably done among the Tamil and Telugu people coming to the city for work.[2]

1 If the Industrial Home of the able-bodied is housed in the *Chembur Evacuation Camp* as proposed, this difficulty of lodging the mill workers in the city may not arise at least for some time to come. For, about a mile from the Camp are situated two Textile mills in Kurla, viz., the Svadeshi Mills Co., Ltd., and Coorla Spinning & Weaving Co., Ltd., belonging to Messrs. Tata Sons Ltd., & Messrs. Cowasji Jehangir & Co., Ltd., and if these were approached and requested, they may take up a large portion of the semi-trained inmates of the Industrial Home for employment in their mills. In fact, when the Sethna Committee appointed for this very purpose considered this matter in 1918-19, the members approached the Directors of Messrs. Tata Sons Ltd., with such a request and the latter were good enough to agree to employing as many able-bodied persons out of the beggar population as were sent to their mills as is done by the mills at Sholapur with regard to the inmates of the so-called Criminal Tribes Settlement. (*Vide Report*—Appendix No. 6, p. 45, Section 10).

2 Whether our beggar inmates will be very punctilious about the observance of *caste* and whether they have organised themselves in the city in such *caste-groups* will be a matter to be looked into. To start with, this idea may be discouraged, though it must be done with a certain amount of tact and skilful handling of the problem, and if absolutely necessary in certain respects, some allowance may be made, e.g., in matters of meat and vegetarian

Casual Labour in the Engineering Works and Conservancy Department of the Municipality.—The Municipality can absorb some more *casual labour* on its various *engineering works* such as road repairs and construction, stone crushers, etc., and in the *Conservancy Department*—say to the extent of about 50 to 100 daily in place of the absentees. Some special arrangements will have to be made to inform the Home as to where the men and women may be sent daily for employment and, if the Home is situated far away from the city, some arrangements may have to be made for transport or for lodging of this batch in an accessible locality.

Domestic Servants, Malis, etc.—As there is a dearth of domestic servants in the city and there is a ready field for employment of men and women in such callings and the training required is not elaborate or of a technical nature, it would be advantageous to employ some good male and female retired or middle-aged workers to train up a batch of male and female inmates as *general domestic helpmates, bearers, ayahs, wardboys, sweepers,* and some capable persons may even be trained up as *cooks.* All this kind of training can be taken at the Industrial Home by actually helping in its varied work, and within 3 to 6 months or a year such persons can be sent out as full-fledged, properly disciplined workers trained not only in their work but also in good and clean habits. The Home may thus come to supply a greatly felt need of clean, decent, well-behaved domestic servants who are so difficult to procure under Indian conditions. As most of these workers will go to decent homes and will get food, clothing, shelter and wages in addition, their lot would be very much improved and in any case would be far better than their begging condition in streets, homeless and helpless as many would be in old age. This type of training, if properly and systematically developed, will be a great success if the trainees are carefully chosen from amongst the most reliable and willing inmates of the Home.

diet, disposal of the dead, marriage by language-groups, etc. The Moslems, Hindus and Scheduled or Backward classes and such others may have to be provided for specially in some such matters and with regard to worship if the inmates are devout or religious-minded, though, as stated above, too many distinctions of this sort should not be encouraged as far as possible.

Similarly, a few men and women can be trained to do *mali's* work, which, besides creating beautiful surroundings for the Shelter, Industrial Home and Infirmary, will also give them employment, as *malis* are in fair demand in the city.

Able-bodied Inmates to be made to do Productive Work and Younger People to be Apprenticed.—As it will be difficult and costly for the Industrial Home to undertake any very elaborate industrial training of the inmates at a fairly advanced age in various branches of technical or industrial operations, it would be desirable to look out for other avenues of employment where unskilled or semi-skilled workers are required, and build up contacts with works and factories, where men and women could be supplied as manual workers or unskilled labourers on normal wages, after the inmates have been given a relatively intensive training in habit formation, application, cleanliness, methodical work, etc., for a period ranging from 2 to 4 months. Otherwise, the cost of maintenance would mount up and it should be the object of the Home to see that able-bodied men and women are put to productive work from the commencement of their stay in the Industrial Home, though it should also be seen that the erstwhile idlers are broken into habits of industry and application step by step, so that there may not be created in them a violent reaction or disgust for work or manual labour. *Younger men* and women may also be *apprenticed* in productive work in concerns willing to take them up on a low remuneration to start with.

Accommodation in the Industrial Home.—The Industrial Home can be located in or preferably on the outskirts of the city, but it should be for obvious reasons within easy and convenient access thereof so that the inmates may easily go to their respective work in various industrial concerns there. Otherwise, either a building will have to be hired in the city for lodging the men and women working in mills, factories and other concerns or easy transport facilities provided, which can be done by keeping a few buses. As there is an Evacuation Camp at Chembur, the Home may be located there, as such a step will save large initial costs and help in launching the Scheme

almost immediately. To start with, accommodation may be provided for about 200 men and 100 women and more structures may be put up gradually as the number of inmates increases. There will have to be separate *dormitories* for men and women, *dining rooms,* and some accommodation for families wherever it is considered desirable to keep them together even for a short time, before suitable arrangements are made either for the entire family or separately for children. Kitchen, storeroom, sanitary conveniences, baths, etc., and living quarters for the personnel of the Home will have to be provided. There will have to be two Sick Rooms for male and female inmates. If suitable premises as stated above are available, they may be utilised ; if not, I would first suggest the hiring or requisitioning of some suitable property, and building later in the light of experience gained. If, however, it is proposed to build immediately I would suggest going in for reed or bamboo matting and mud-daubing for walls and asbestos sheets or *zavli* (palm-leaf) for roofing, with raised plinths for flooring and Shahbad stones for pavements or even cowdung-smeared flooring. Care should be taken, however, to keep the premises clean and sanitary. Millions of Indians live in such houses or huts and Indian climate is such that, except for the monsoon, there is no great hardship under such conditions. The structures should, however, be airy, well-lighted and well-ventilated, and there should be some thought given to careful planning, especially of the dormitories, dining rooms and verandahs, so that utmost use can be made of these enclosed spaces for more purposes than one. Very often such large spaces are wasted or insufficiently used.

Worksheds should be in the same compound and these too can be first of a temporary nature constructed of materials as above, so that they may not turn out to be inconvenient for lack of forethought in planning.

The Industrial Home will Absorb all Classes of Able-bodied Persons.—The Industrial Home will be in a position to take up all able-bodied persons, men and women, belonging to all the classes from (a) to (e) for being trained for a job and assigned one when

the person is considered fit to take it. The training should not take very long as it will not be suitable for grown up adults and particularly of the types of mentally disintegrated adults uprooted from their social moorings who will mostly constitute the class of beggars arrested from streets.

Whether Man and Wife or Man and Woman should be Lodged together and Allowed to Procreate.—There will be slight variations, however, with regard to the conditions of residence for the classes formed of 'a man and wife,' 'man and woman' and families including young children. Two things will have to be decided, *viz.*, (1) whether man and wife and man and woman should be allowed to live together and if they are allowed to live together (2) whether they should be allowed to procreate freely or taught *contraception* so that some check on the unwanted progeny in their initial helpless condition may be exercised.

It would be difficult to lay down hard and fast rules in such cases and it should be left to the officials in charge to make observations of the actual conditions of such people and put up their proposals or recommendations from time to time for consideration by the Managing Committee. But a few general observations may be made in this respect. At first men and women, to whatever category they may belong, may be separated in two houses according to sex, unless one or the other is so crippled, defective or helpless that he or she needs the help of the other, in which case they may be allowed to stay in what may be called *Family Quarters*. These may be in a separate chawl, shed or enclosure. Similarly, each family with children may be considered on its own merits. If there are very young children, say under 4 or 5, they will have to be allowed to remain with their mothers even if the latter are separated from their husbands. Except in the above two types of cases, in the initial stages of the Industrial Home, both the sexes may be separated and the man and wife or man and woman, and parents and children may be allowed to meet during certain hours of the day. If the parents have a bad influence on their children, they will have to be separated from them more completely. If,

after observations extending over a month or more, the Guardian Superintendent considers it helpful or beneficial to allow families to live together, he may do so in selected cases.

Necessity of Contraception to Couples of Child-bearing Age.—But it will have to be impressed on the minds of the couples that they should exercise restraint and not have children as they will be born in very unhappy and helpless conditions and that they should, therefore, take contraceptive measures to check births. The teaching of simple *methods of birth-control or contraception* should be a regular feature of the training of these classes of couples of child-bearing age, as both in the case of their remaining segregated in the Home or leaving it to seek employment outside, this knowledge will be of help to them if properly given. We will not discuss here the question of *sterilization of the physically or mentally unfit*, but it will force itself on the attention of the authorities handling the beggar problem sooner than they may imagine, if they are serious about a systematic and scientific handling of the problem of poverty, destitution and beggary whereof the defective and diseased form a fairly large proportion.

The Defective, Disabled or Diseased.—Now remain the class of defectives, diseased or disabled to be considered. These will be both *owned and disowned* or helpless. Those owned may be given away if their parents or guardians are willing to look after them and give an assurance not to trade on them or abandon them to beg in the streets. Those disowned and helpless will have to be taken care of by the Rehabilition Committee. These will naturally be sorted out at the Shelter, whence they can be directed to suitable places according to the requirements of each case. It is difficult at this stage to surmise the proportion of the utterly helpless or disabled population of men, women and children among the beggars of the city. The enumerators at the recent census of the homeless for purposes of rationing, guessed the figure of the disabled and defective to be about 3 to 5% in a population of about 10,000,[1] *i.e.*, about 300 to 500, whereas they put the

[1] *Vide* Footnote 2, page 125

percentage of those suffering from various types of minor or major skin diseases at 7 to 8%, *i.e.*, 700 to 800.

Their Numbers.—According to the Special Census of the Corporation in November 1921 (referred to on page125), there were 1,846 persons of both sexes "suffering from disabling infirmities" out of a total population of 6,883 beggars, secular as well as religious, as follows:—

	Ordinary Beggars over 16	Religious Beggars	Ordinary under 16	Total
Disabled ...	1,382	373	91	1,846
Able-bodied ...	1,983	1,598	1,456	5,037
	1,755 Disabled (Adults)			
	Male 1,249	Female 506		

Their Classification and how to Occupy the Minds of some of the Defective and Infirm but Partially Capable of Light Work.—The infirmities of these 1,846 disabled persons were classified as follows†:—

Nature of Infirmity	Number of Beggars including Secular and Religious		
	Above 16	Under 16	Total
1. Infirm through old age ...	598	...	598 —32.5%
2. Blind in both eyes ...	543	43	586 —32%
3. Deformed ...	153	12	165*—8.75%
4. Loss of limb ...	140	7	147*—8%
5. Paralysed ...	85	3	88*—5%
6. Of Unsound mind ...	65	4	69 —3.8%
7. Leprosy ...	56	1	57
8. Loathsome sores (Veneral) ...	40	3	43
9. Deaf and Dumb ...	11	1	12
10. Other infirmities ...	64	17	81
Total ...	1,755	91	1,846

† Cp. Starte's Report pp. 21-22.

* These descriptions do not give us much idea about the actual nature of defects, deformities or disabilities.

According to the above tables, we find that, leaving aside the religious beggars, there were about (1,382+91=1,473) persons of both sexes, who were suffering from some deformity or dis-

ability. Whether these infirmities were of such nature as to incapacitate the persons for any productive work whatever is not stated and we may take it that the blind, deaf and dumb, some of the infirm through old age, and those who are classified as deformed or having lost a limb can be made to do some work either with their hands or legs. It would be a desirable thing to find out various types of lighter work or ancillary operations and processes which these defective or slightly infirm persons can be appropriately called upon to perform. For, it would be a good policy not to keep these people completely idle : if they are able to do some lighter work according to their capacity and occupy their minds for a few hours a day it will do them good. Besides healthily occupying their minds, they will have the satisfaction of having contributed a little towards their own keep. This may also be a lesson to the other able-bodied confrères of theirs. Moreover, the number of such people capable of partial work will be so large that it will be advantageous actually to think out and devise some lighter kind of work for these various types of defective or partially infirm people.

The Distribution of the Aged, Infirm and Deformed Among Suitable Institutions.—The consideration of the above will also help us to decide upon the place or places where these defective, diseased or disabled persons may be kept. Now we cannot rely upon the above figures for calculating the present probable total number of disabled and defective or the number according to each classification. For, since 1921, the numbers may have been reduced because of suitable institutions like hospitals, infirmaries or dharmashālās taking care of some of these persons from the streets. All the same, we may have to deal with about 500 to 1,000 of such persons, *the largest of this group even now being the infirm through old age.*

The Blind, Leprous and Insane to be sent to Respective Existing Institutions.—As regards the *blind*, the *leprous* and the *insane*, it would be better to send them to the existing appropriate institutions in and outside the city that care for such persons. If the numbers become gradually so

large that the respective institutions are unable to accommodate them because of shortage of funds for requisite expenditure or lack of living space, it would be advisable to help them to raise funds or contribute a certain minimum share of expenses for every additional person sent to them by the Rehabilitation Committee than to start new homes or institutions for such persons on its own, as it will be much more costly to do so, and perhaps the relief rendered may not be as effective or good as the established institutions will be able to render with their highly specialised knowledge and facilities developed from long experience. Thus it will be better to take the help of institutions like the Victoria Memorial School for the Blind at Tardeo Road, the Sonavala Andhākshi Āshram for Blind Women and Girls at Andheri, the Dadar School for the Blind (educational for children upto 16), the Blind Relief Association Industrial Home at Worli, the N. M. Petit Mental Hospital at Thana, the Hospital for Mental Diseases at Poona, the Acworth Leper Home at Matunga, the Albless Leper Home at Chembur, etc.

Those Needing Constant Medical Attention to be sent to King George V Infirmary.—There will be another class of defectives, diseased or infirm, who will require *constant medical attention or specialised treatment.* The best place for such people would be *the King George V Memorial Infirmary,* which is conveniently situated in the City and where they can get both medical care and nursing. With some expansion, if necessary, on its available grounds, it can accommodate a much larger number than 80 to 100 as hitherto of the acute cases needing constant medical care, and if funds have to be made available for the cases sent to it by the Rehabilitation Committee, it would be financially more advantageous to do so than to found another similar institution with the same purpose, as will have to be done for the number of chronic and acute deformed and defective that will be found with or among the beggar population of the City. This institution has still spacious grounds at its disposal and with the augmentation of some staff and one or two cheaper structures,

it can easily take in about 100 to 150 cases more if their maintenance charges at about twelve to fourteen annas per person are provided.

Infirmary for Others and Asylum for the Aged.—The next type of *Infirmary* (अशक्त-धाम) that we require will be for the paralysed, deformed, deaf and dumb, those who have lost a limb, and such others, but not requiring constant medical attention or nursing. For such types of cases, the best place for an Infirmary will be one close and attached to the Industrial Home where the able-bodied persons are to be lodged. For, the ayahs, ward-boys, attendants, sweepers and others, who will be required for taking care of these, can be found and trained from among the able-bodied men and women ; the cooking can be done by the kitchen department for the feeding of the able bodied persons and the same supervising and clerical staff can look after the institution with the help of a matron, a few nurses and ayahs, thus saving a considerable amount in the cost of running a separate infirmary at a detached centre. Besides, some of the defectives can, as stated above, use their hands and legs and give some productive service, if and when possible. A further advantage will be the possibility of training which the attached Infirmary will afford to able-bodied men and women as ward-boys, attendants, ayahs, domestic servants and the like.

For the same reason, the *Asylum* (वृद्ध-विराम) for the aged and infirm should also be located near the Industrial Home so that those, who can do some light work, may do so and if they are too old and infirm, the work of attending to their needs may be done by men and women drafted from the able-bodied section of the inmates of the Industrial Home. Besides, located as these various institutions will be in a less crowded part of the outskirts of the city or the suburbs, their running will cost much less than if they were located in the city, where they need not be. I believe Chembur will be a very suitable place for such people.

The Aged, Infirm and Defective will be a Fairly Heavy Liability.—All these three types of the diseased, deformed or infirm,

aged and infirm, and ordinary defective infirm will require feeding, clothing and lodging, and some medical care and nursing. They will be a fairly heavy liability, and a constant one at that, until their numbers are gradually reduced by a better care of the poor and destitute by some sort of country-wide legislation like Poor Law or Social Insurance. For, till then, the beggars, destitutes and poverty-stricken will be producing underfed, under-nourished, maimed and mutilated progeny easily prone to disease, defects and deformities.

The Main Objective of the Industrial Home, the Rehabilitation of the Beggar or Destitute.—It will happen that some of the able-bodied men and women may give trouble in the Industrial Home, some may commit small offences, thefts, etc.; some may be idlers, some shirkers, some may be violent or querulous and the Guardian Superintendent and his subordinates will, therefore, have to be given certain powers to punish for first, second, third or frequent offences or breach of discipline. These punishments may be suited to the gravity of the offence, but the first general objective of the Home should be to reform or reorientate the inmate through indirect and persuasive or educative influence by providing a suitable atmosphere in which he or she lives and works. The idea of condemnation or punishment should be absent as far as possible in the normal routine of the Home to which the beggar is first introduced. It should not be taken to be a *Reformatory or Prison* but a *real Home for Rehabilitation*, and the spirit of genuine helpfulness through understanding of the past and present life-history and condition of the individual beggar and beggar-family should actuate the rehabilitation efforts of the Home and its officials. It is with this idea that two posts of an Honorary Psychiatrist and a paid trained Assistant have been proposed on the staff of the Industrial Home and Infirmary as such help will also be required for dealing with several problem cases that will be inevitably found among this class of detribalised population of life-long beggars.

Work-House or Penitentiary for the Habitual Offender or Incorrigible.—However, with the best of atmosphere and intentions, there

will be hardened souls who will revolt against discipline and the so-called confinement in a reform home. Minor punishments such as reproach, withholding of a meal, prolongation of the period of remand in the Home, or not allowing the good-behaviour period for earlier release, etc., may be inflicted in case of deliberate and frequent violation of discipline or bad behaviour by the Guardian Superintendent or his Assistant. If the inmates are still unrepentant, cause trouble or refuse to submit themselves to discipline, a charge sheet may be framed against them and they may be produced before a Magistrate who may give a punitive sentence ranging from a few days to some months in the *Work-House or Penitentiary* (सुधार-खाना). The incorrigibles and those that are caught begging a third time after two previous convictions and remand for begging may be sent to this institution, where the treatment should be humane but where discipline should be firm and the offenders are put to hard work such as of grinding corn, agriculture and dairy work, etc., in addition to all the household work for themselves such as sweeping their own premises, cooking their own food, washing their own clothes, etc. However, the spirit pervading the Work-House or Penitentiary should not be exactly that of a prison and the inmates should not be brutalised or hardened into criminals by unduly harsh treatment. The object should be to make the inmate or offender feel sorry for his offence, violation of rules, breach of discipline or persistent anti-social behaviour and bring him round. The officials of the Industrial Home and particularly the psychiatrists should not be entirely out of touch with the inmates of the Penitentiary, and gentle methods of reform through persuasion and some kindness should be simultaneously employed.

Its Management.—For the above reasons, however, the institution recommended above will have to be located not far from the Industrial Home, (though it should be at some distance from it), and should be in its own enclosure with a necessary wall. The officials in charge should be different from those of the Industrial Home at least after the number of such incorrigibles has reached over 20 or 25. This institution should not

be started till some experience in the running of the Industrial Home has been acquired.

Treatment of the First, Second and Third Remands and of Absconders.—A word or two may be said here about the remand of the beggar to the Shelter and housing him in the Industrial Home. At the first arrest, as we have already indicated before, we need not treat him harshly but try our best to rehabilitate him if he is amenable to such kindly treatment. The Shelter Supervisor may have the power to release him under circumstances already stated, before his term of remand for three months or less expires. The Guardian Superintendent of the Industrial Home and Asylum-Infirmary should have similar powers of releasing the inmates after a shorter or longer period on the first arrest and remand, if he is satisfied that the inmate so released is genuinely desirous of going back to normal life and will not revert to begging.

On the second arrest of a released inmate, however, the term of institutionalisation will have to be longer, say six months, and he will have to remain under strict surveillance, and his movements and freedom in the Industrial Home will have to be curtailed. Such second arrests will have to be housed in a separate shed, perhaps under a watchman in order to prevent them from absconding. That is also the reason why we have suggested a wall or enclosure for the Industrial Home of the able-bodied and the engagement of night and day watchmen. In case of the second remands, the Shelter Supervisor or Guardian Superintendent should have no power to release, but if he is satisfied that after three months of stay, the inmate may be released with advantage, he may make a recommendation accordingly to the Management Committee or to the Magistrate who may pass orders as he thinks advisable.

As regards the Magistrates before whom the arrested beggars may be produced, they can be either a special panel or panels of Honorary Magistrates or Stipendiary Magistrates who may appoint particular hours of the day two or three times a week for hearing and disposing of such cases of beggars pro-

duced before them by the Police or the authorised Agents of the Rehabilitation Committee.

With regard to those arrested for a third time for begging, and especially those who had absconded from the Shelter, Industrial Home, Asylum or Infirmary, stricter punishment and control may be necessary. So long, however, as they are willing, they may be put to productive work; if they refuse, shirk, malinger or commit breaches of discipline or commit frequent offences they must be dealt with as a class of incorrigibles. It will, however, be a matter for consideration as to whether able-bodied inmates should be allowed to remain in the Industrial Home longer than a year. If they are such as to be unable to find work or look after themselves, give no trouble and like to remain under the sheltered care of the Institution, willingly doing the entrusted work, the institution should undertake the responsibility of housing, feeding and providing productive work for such persons in their interest as well as of the entire idea of rehabilitation. But generally it should be the aim of the institution to train and rehabilitate the able-bodied person in such a way that he is able to take care of himself as an ordinary citizen after institutional care of a short duration. For the same reasons, those destitutes, who, instead of resorting to begging, voluntarily seek refuge in the Shelter or Industrial Home will have to be provided for in a suitable way after proper investigation.

PART III

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

Organisation, Management and Finance.—As already stated above, the tackling of the beggar question is a country-wide problem and it will ultimately have to be handled on that scale if a satisfactory solution thereof is contemplated. In the long run it will certainly defy scattered and desultory efforts of individual cities or provinces, for, the beggars migrate from long distances and a majority of those found in a city very often belong not to the city itself nor to the province in the sense

that they are born there, but to other cities or provinces.[1] For the effective handling of the problem, *repatriation* and *prohibition of unauthorised immigration* into the city of foreign or non-indigenous beggars will have to be two important remedial measures, and to achieve that co-operation between Provinces and States, co-ordination and legislation on an all-India basis by the Central Government will be necessary. That stage may, however, be long to reach, even though inevitable at last, once the problem of beggars is begun to be seriously tackled by the metropolitan cities.

However that may be, we have already stressed the necessity of close co-operation between the Provincial Government, the Municipal Corporation and the citizens in general for a proper handling of the beggar problem in every city. All the three bodies will have to share the responsibility not only of raising the finances but also of management and supervision of the institutions as interested parties.

Finance.—A Small Percentage of U.I.P. Tax may be set aside for this Purpose in the Earlier Stages.—As regards finances, I believe as the beggars are not all or even a majority of them made in the city but come from mofussil towns and villages of the province and from beyond the provincial borders, the Provincial Government must bear the major share of the expenses, *i.e.*, in the ultimate analysis, the general tax-payer. Now a major portion of the expenses can be met if the Government of Bombay at least for some time to come, agree to set apart a varying percentage of the *Urban Immoveable Property Tax* for the expenses of this scheme of rehabilitating

1 For instance, when a survey of the beggars of about 16 Wards of the City of Calcutta was made by Dr. E. Muir of the School of Tropical Medicine some 9 years ago, it was found that they were composed of the following indigenous and immigrant population :—

From		*Non-leprous Beggars*		*Leprous Beggars*	
Bengal	...	471		21	
Bihar & Orissa	...	389	1,743	53	203
United Provinces	...	121		22	
Central Province	...	78		120	
Others	...	1,155		8	
		2,214		224	

(*The Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, Sixth Health Number—pp. 25-28)

In the cities of Mysore and Bangalore out of 2,800 and 5,749 beggars, the numbers of those born outside the State were 1,190 and 2,200 respectively, i.e., 40% being entirely from outside the State boundaries. (*Vide* p. 103—Mysore Beggar Committee Report 1943).

the beggars. At present they levy in the city of Bombay a tax of 3½% or 7% on properties according as their annual Ratable Value is above Rs. 500 or 2,000, those below Rs. 500 being exempted. This tax in the City brings them an annual revenue of about Rs. 87,00,000. If ½ or ¾ of 1% or 1% of such a tax on properties in the City were set aside for the handling of the beggar problem, the amount would come to above Rs. 7,25,000, Rs. 11,00,000 and Rs. 14,50,000 on a total Ratable Value of about Rs. 14½ crores exclusive of exemptions allowed under the Municipal Act.

The Bombay Municipality collects the U.I.P., Tax for Government and receives a rebate of 2% on the total amount for its expenses of collection. The Government can earmark this ½ to 1% of the Urban Property Tax for the expenses of the beggar salvage scheme at least for the time being till other sources of taxation can be found, though there is no reason why this source may not be allowed to continue even when the U.I.P., Tax is abolished or given up in favour of the Municipality as its exclusive sphere of taxation. Such a tax can also be collected in other provincial cities, as is done at present in Ahmedabad and Sholapur, and even in smaller towns to meet what will ultimately be a much larger expenditure of rehabilitating the very large number of beggars in the whole province. The Municipality can forego its rebate on the collection of the tax for this purpose or contribute a certain amount as its own share.

As the beggars would hail from all over the province, when the expenditure rises over this revenue from the property tax, a certain proportion, upto a maximum of the same amount as realised from the ½ to 1% tax, may be contributed by the Provincial Government from the general provincial revenues in order effectively to tackle this problem of beggars which, in its ultimate analysis, will be a problem of solving the social malaise of poverty, destitution and malingering. Various cities in the West contribute part or whole of the entertainment tax towards the maintenance of the poor law institutions or levy a stamp duty or a small surcharge on transfer of properties or derive

a small income from marriage tax, all of which can be tried in our country also as found suitable.

Other Sources of Income—Private and Public Charities and Endowments.—Other sources of revenue would be a large number of communal Charity Trusts or Endowments, wealthy philanthropists and the public or citizens at large. There are several Hindu Sadāvrats, Dharmashālās and Trusts and Muslim Wakfs and Jamatkhanas that provide meals to the poor and destitute, feed beggars as well as Brahmins, Sadhus and Fakirs. Some have regular premises and endowments whose incomes are utilised towards distributing dry rations or cooked meals. Some of these can be induced to divert their income to feed a fixed number of beggars at the Shelter, Industrial Home, Asylum or Infirmary for a fixed number of days or 365 days of the year according to their income or the amount they can spare for the purpose. The required or agreed number may be assigned to each of the Sadavrats, Trusts or Wakfs offering their co-operation. Similar appeals to feed or bear the full expenses of maintenance of one or more beggars occasionally or all the year round can be made to charitably or religiously minded citizens, and it is reasonable to hope that the appeal of a well organised body or reputed citizens, Corporators and Government Officials will not go in vain.[1]

The question of meeting the expenses has often frightened all parties concerned, *viz.*, Government, the Municipality and the public citizens, apprehending that looking to the enormous numbers of beggars counted at the various censuses, the cost would be colossal. But then the most veterate beggar rarely likes to forego his liberty and remain under discipline for long in an institution however inviting the atmosphere thereof may otherwise be. One cannot, therefore, subscribe to the fear that beggars and vagrants from all over the country will swamp

1 A person who gives a sum of Rs. 3,000, the interest of which may be used for maintaining one helpless, infirm or aged beggar throughout the year, may have a *plaque* or *tablet* inscribed on a Memorial Pillar of Donors to be kept at a suitable place. This might induce several citizens to contribute their mite towards the scheme either in their own name or in the names of their dear departed ones.

such institutions and be a permanent burden on the cities harbouring them.

Further, the cost of tackling a social malady or evil systematically and scientifically is not more in the long run than the cost incurred by the Society at large, trying in a loose, disorganised manner to palliate the resulting evils or suffering of the festering sore (*vide* Appendix III for costs worked out on a Provincial and on an all-India basis).

The Rehabilitation Committee or Committee of Management and Representation thereon.—The various institutions can be under the charge of Government or Municipality, the officials being either under one of the departments of the Secretariat or the Municipal Commissioner, with Government or Municipal Service and Pension or Provident Fund Rules and Regulations being made applicable to them. However, as Charity Trusts, Endowments and the public will always be in a position to make a contribution towards the expenses of the rehabilitation of beggars, it would be advisable to let them have some representation on the management of what may be called the Poor Man's Rehabilitation Scheme. The Committee of Management may not, however, be made an unwieldy body and I would suggest the following *tentative* composition of the Rehabilitation Committee :—

Eight representatives of Government, including (1) the Secretary and (2) Under-Secretary of the Department in Charge, (3) the Commissioner of Police, (4) the Commissioner of Labour, (5) the Labour Welfare Officer, (6) the Officer in Charge of King George V Infirmary, who will also represent the Salvation Army and (7-8) two others, preferably representing the two Railway Administrations.

Six representatives of the Municipal Corporation, inclusive of the Mayor and the Municipal Commissioner or his Deputy, and four Corporators.

Four representatives of the Sadavarts, Wakfs, Trusts, etc., donating not less than Rs. 1,000 in cash or kind per annum—appointed at a meeting of one representative of each of such

trusts called by Government for the purpose at a place appointed by them.

Four representatives of the donor citizens of Rs. 100/- per annum and upwards elected at a meeting of such donors in the year, called by Government on an appointed day for the purpose.[1]

President, Vice-President, Secretaries, and other Office-Bearers.—The Secretary of the Government Department in Charge may preside at the meetings called once a month or oftener as required, or the Committee may be allowed to elect its own President for a term of 3 years, so that the services of a person conversant with the working of the institutions may be available, which would not happen if the President were to change every year. A Vice-President to preside in the absence of the President; he may be elected. One of the members and one of the superior officials in charge of one of the institutions, preferably the Industrial Home, may act as Jt. Hon. Secretaries, the non-official Jt. Secretary holding office for three years in order to preserve continuity of working.

The officers in charge of the Shelter, Industrial Home, Asylum, Infirmaries and the Work-House or Penitentiary may be ordinarily allowed to attend the meetings and when their presence is not required, they may be requested to leave the meetings for the time being. They may supply the required information to the Committee, whereas the Guardian Superintendent of the Industrial Home and Asylum and Infirmary may act as the permanent Jt. Secretary of the Committee. For purposes of co-ordination of the work of various institutions under the Scheme, he may be appointed as the supervising authority over all of them.

Much will depend upon the interest the members of the Committee may take, but much more certainly on the officials chosen to take charge of the various institutions. They will have to be men of training, vision and adaptability with a broad outlook on life, broader human sympathies, and vigour and zeal for execution.

1 It would be advisable to appoint on the Committee one or two representatives of the Children's Aid Society so that easier cooperation and interchange of experience between the Society and Rehabilitation Committee may be rendered possible to the advantage of both the bodies. With the same end in view it may be helpful to appoint one representative each of the Social Service League and the Salvation Army on the Committee.

In any case they must be men who have received some training and practical experience of the type of welfare work they will be called upon to do.

The Problem will have to be Tackled Gradually as Funds, Accommodation and Arrangements Permit and not All at once.— The above is a rough skeleton of a scheme for handling the rather difficult but not baffling problem of beggars. It will have to be discussed in greater detail by a committee or conference of interested and experienced members, suitably amended as required and any lacunae duly filled in. The problem will present difficulties in the initial stages but they will not be insurmountable if the Government, the Municipality and the citizens in general are willing to play their respective part and begin on a modest scale. None should think that the entire beggar population of the city should or could be arrested and institutionalised in a day, a month or a year. Effect may be given to the enactment gradually and arrests may be made in smaller batches as our facilities permit. If the proposed institutions are filled up sooner than expected, the seizure activities may be slowed down till more room, more facilities and the requisite funds are available.

A programme of arrests after the enactment of legislation may be prepared and those suffering from loathsome sores, leprosy, crippling defects and contagious or infectious diseases may be arrested first and appropriately dealt with as suggested above. Batches of able-bodied men and women of a pestering and persistent type, well known to all pedestrians and the public travelling by bus, tram and train, may be attended to in manageable numbers later or simultaneously from certain places popular with the beggars. This will have a very salutary effect on a large number of the begging fraternity and their leaders or organisers who may then be compelled to direct their attention elsewhere. It is a remarkable fact observed wherever legislation for the prevention of beggary has been introduced that, almost on the first impact of its enforcement, from 50 to 75% of the beggar population of the place somehow or other makes itself scarce in a very short time.

The Present is an Opportune Time for Handling the Problem. Accommodation Available.—The present is an opportune time for making a start, for the accommodation for the initial two Institutions most necessary for our purpose, *viz.*, the Shelter and the Industrial Home with two Infirmaries and Asylum for the aged, can already be made available. There is room for 70 to 80 infirm and about 150 destitute inmates at the King George V, Memorial Infirmary and Lady Dhunbai Home for the Destitutes at Haines Road, and accommodation for 500 to 600 inmates in the sheds erected for the Evacuation Camp at Chembur. With further negotiations with the authorities in charge of the two institutions and with suitable legislation which can be passed expeditiously, the work can begin after the initial personnel has been engaged. No doubt, a good deal of hard work lies ahead of the organisers, but the problem calls for such work and its successful solution will be its own reward.

From the city the handling of the problem may spread to other sister cities in the province and with mutual co-operation to the entire province in due course. Later, the inter-provincial problems of *repatriation, bearing proportionate expenditure of its own provincials*, etc., may have to be tackled and the Central Government may have to be moved to legislate on an all-India basis.[1] These are inevitable corollaries, but the first spade work has to be done by and in the metropolitan cities. The problem after all cannot be so gigantic as to defy all earnest attempts, which, we must remember, have not been properly and adequately made so far; and if systematically tackled, the efforts will yield results, if not immediately, certainly in due course. But there can be no two opinions about the fact that a beginning has to be made some day either by Government, Municipalities or some citizen public.[2]

1 It may be of interest to know that the acuteness of the beggar nuisance is so keenly felt in several cities of India and Ceylon that either legislation has already been enacted or bills have been introduced making begging an offence and providing for institutional relief in the following Provinces and States, viz. :—

Acts :—Colombo (1906), Madras (1941), Hyderabad-Deccan, (1941), Lucknow (1942).
Rules in Municipalities, Railways, etc.—Indian Railways (1941), Bangalore (1940), Cawnpore (1939), Nagpur (1941). Bills by Committees appointed report—C.P. Govt. (1942-3). U. P. Govt. (1941), Sind (1940), Mysore (1941), Cochin (1940).

2 The Scheme has been worked out with a view to make it applicable to large cities.

Smaller towns will however have similar problems to face though on a minor scale. Each small town may not be able to provide the different kinds of institutions required for different types of beggars, nor can they afford singly to incur such expenditure. Besides, if the number of persons to be cared for is small, it would be wasteful to provide different types of institutions and engage efficient personnel for each one of them as required. For such smaller towns, it would be better to combine and locate the various institutions in one central and convenient place and bear proportionate expenditure according to the number of beggars in their particular jurisdiction. Several neighbouring taluka towns or a whole district can thus combine, avail themselves of the existing specialized institutions for lepers, blind, insane or cripple in the District and only found such additional institutions as are required in a conveniently accessible and suitable centre, contributing their proportionate quota of expenditure to the entire Scheme. One or more towns will either have to take the initiative in such cases or the head of the District will have to do so inviting Government officials and local bodies to a preliminary conference to work out the details of such a scheme for the District or a group of towns.

10

LEGISLATION RELATING TO BEGGARY

Mr. John Barnabas discusses the need of legislation for the elimination of beggary and shows how this need was met in some of the countries of the West. Further, he points out the existing legal provisions in India which could be used for the control of vagrancy as well as the merits and demerits of the various Bills and recent Acts enacted for the prevention of beggary. In the light of our experience and that of the West, he makes valuable suggestions for the framing of an ideal Vagrancy Act.

PERHAPS India is the only country in the world where fourteen lakhs of its population wander about the streets with perfect freedom, living on the spontaneous, unorganized charity of individual citizens. Again, it is India where alone the Census Report can consider fit to list 'beggary' and 'vagrancy' among the occupations or means of livelihood, though unproductive. Still again, in this age of science, it is India which unlike other prgressive countries, gives beggary a professional status. Though beggars may be found in other parts of the civilized world, it is here that the public without the least feeling of disagrace tolerates persistent, open and methodical begging in public places without

let, or hindrance. While in the West the beggar begs on the sly—and that too under the cover of some petty trade—and the citizen gives alms with a feeling of remorse, in India the beggar begs importunately with the attitude of one demanding his daily wages or with the contentment of one proudly carrying on his parental profession; the citizen, in his turn, doles out his charity with religious unction and the self-satisfaction of doing a good deed. Indeed, public begging is so common in our country largely because, on the one hand, it carries with it no invidious implications while, on the other, it claims to have the support of religion.

As a result, the beggar in India has taken undue advantage of his social liberty, or has been forced to do so by circumstances over which he has no control. Similarly, the public has misjudged its social obligation, its religious duty and its economic responsibility. It has yet to realize that the maintenance of vagrants at public expense is contrary to sound economic law, detrimental to the common good and unscientific as philanthropy. The beggar's existence on the street, as has been pointed out elsewhere in this book, is a great menace to public health. And, what is more, it is disastrous to the normal growth and development of the personality of the beggar himself.

Does Religion Sanction Beggary?—What then shall we do with him? How shall we tackle this problem? The fact that beggary and charity are closely associated in the popular mind with religion makes it all the more difficult to put through measures of control. The common belief is that beggary has the sanction of religion and that individual almsgiving is essential for salvation. Hence, any attempt to prevent beggary naturally meets with opposition. If one were to read the reports of discussions on the beggar problem in Corporations and other bodies during the 20's of this century, he would find ample evidence of vehement opposition on religious ground to measures proposed for the prevention of public begging. The poor are always with us, they say, and the beggar is there as a perpetual reminder to the more fortunate of the miseries of mankind—a reminder which may have a sobering effect on the natural tendency of

the average man to be worldly. Then again, the beggar is there, we are told, by divine sanction to give an opportunity to the privileged to be charitable and store up merit for their own salvation. He undergoes physical damnation for the spiritual benefit of others! If the beggar thus fills a moral necessity in society, why should, they ask, the State try to eliminate beggary and thus deprive others of the opportunity of attaining *Nirvāṇa* through giving of alms?

Is this view tenable? Does religion really sanction beggary? As far back as 1919, the Bombay Government appointed an influential and representative Committee to consider and formulate proposals for the prevention of professional beggary in the Bombay Presidency. Regarding the status of 'religious' beggars, the Committee consulted fourteen heads of religious denominations of Hinduism and Jainism, and twenty-three gentlemen of Muslim faith. In addition to these, they consulted six leading citizens in each of the districts of the Bombay Province, recommended by the District Magistrates. The gist[1] of this interesting and valuable finding is given below:—

1. "There is no such thing as professional beggary among the followers of (1) Zoroastrianism, (2) Jainism in its two schools of Murtipujaks and non-Murtipujaks, and (3) Vaishnavite School of Vallabhacharya and Swamy Narayan. Similarly, among high class Sanyasins of the Shankaracharya Smarta School the nuisance is comparatively insignificant.

2. "A large majority of professional religious mendicants who infest public streets come out of certain sects or denominations like Bawas, Bairagis, Jangams and Nagda having no religious or secular education.

3. "There is a concensus of opinion among religious heads of recognised denominations of Hinduism that although begging is permissible among those who renounce the world, the present mode of going-a-begging in public streets and thoroughfares is unjustifiable.

The Committee found some difference of opinion regarding

1 As summarised by Mr. and Mrs. Kodanda Rao and published in a Pamphlet brought out by the Society for the Elimination of Beggary in Nagpur.

Islamic sanction for beggary, but even those who thought that the 'asking and making of charity' was sanctioned by Islam agreed " that the pest of beggars on public streets ought to be stopped."

The final conclusion of the Committee was as follows:—
" The opinions collected by us leave no room for doubt that whatever may be the interpretation of the texts of Hindu or Mohammadan sacred literature on the questions of begging, there is a concensus of opinion that begging in public streets and places as a *profession* is contrary to modern notions of religious sancitity."

Similarly, a special committee, appointed by the Mysore Government to examine the problem of beggary in Mysore State and to suggest measures to eliminate it, recently issued its Report. One of its most interesting sections[1] deals with the question—Is Beggary in India Enjoined by Religion? The conclusion reached by the committee is that in Hindu Law only an ascetic is allowed to beg. And even he who embraces asceticism must first make provision for the maintenance of his wife and sons. As for Islam, the direct descendants of the Prophet stated " Curse be on him who, though capable of bearing his burden, throws it on another." Islam also ordains for the fakir—the Muslim religious mendicant—that his " first duty is to earn his livelihood by hard work." Likewise, Zoroastrianism does not enjoin begging: " Man is born to work and prosper, not to rest and rust.....................Work is the law of life, for the poor and the rich alike."

The authentic findings of the above two committees make it clear that no religion approves of the sort of begging which encourages idleness, nor of indiscriminate charity to idlers and loafers. The liberty given to a beggar with infectious disease to use public paths, roads and conveyances, and infect the healthy public amounts to irrational liberty. And yet lakhs of beggars in India are allowed this irreligious, dangerous and parasitic liberty. On this question of liberty John Stuart Mill, no unreasoning advocate of interference with personal freedom

1 Report of the Committee for the Prevention of Beggary in Mysore, 1943, Chapter IV.

remarked: "Whenever there is a definite damage, or a definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public the case is taken out of the province of liberty and placed in that of morality and law." The tradition of public charity can no longer be allowed to protect the beggar, for that tradition is misplaced philanthropy. We need, therefore, to resort to more scientific methods of protection, care and rehabilitation of the vagrant.

Why People Give Alms.—Before taking up for consideration the legal measures dealing with beggary, we shall examine the contention of some who say that beggary would be stopped if nobody gave alms. So far back as 1764, Dr. Burns in his "History of the Poor Law" asserted that "there is one infallible way to put an end to all this, and the easiest in the world, which consists merely in non-feasance. Give them nothing. If none were to give, none would beg, and the whole mystery and craft would be at an end in a fortnight." Admirable as the suggestion is, it is equally impracticable. People in every country and at all times have acted just the other way. The urge to give alms, even when the giver and the receiver are both accursed, is too strong to be curbed voluntarily. In an interesting study of the "Psychology of Almsgiving" Dr. Clifford Manshardt suggests that there are six main reasons why people give alms:—

1. *Religious Reasons.*—Every religion enjoins upon its followers the giving of alms. Followers of most religions believe in laying up of treasures in Heaven by almsgiving.

2. *Sanction of Custom.*—In ancient India Brahmins were supported by other members of society. Begging in India is associated with the 'superior' class, and therefore no stigma is attached. Almsgiving and virtue of pity have been the celebrated theses of the Hindu religious tradition. The "Fakirs" claim begging to be their 'ancestral profession.'

3. *Personal Reasons.*—(a) To experience the glow of happiness which is associated with the doing of a good deed. It satisfies one's ego. We like to receive the thanks and blessings of the recipient. (b) The hope of acquiring personal gain. A

man losing money in the share bazaar or racing gives alms as a prayer to get back the money. When the child is ill the mother promises alms to the poor before the family deity in return for the health of the child. Relatives give alms to the poor when a person is dead to lighten the gravity of his sins. (c) The blessings of the beggar appeal to certain fundamental human wishes:—The wish for self-preservation is appealed to when the beggar says "may you live long;" the wish for security when he says "may you enjoy prosperity," or the wish for progeny when he says "may you have many children."

4. There are many who give alms *due to fear*—afraid of the curses of the beggar given in the name of God when a beggar is refused alms.

5. *Out of Instantaneous Pity.*—The emaciated baby, the mutilated body, the blind, the lame, the leprous, all evoke pity.

6. *The Careless Giver.*—To the rich change in the pocket is a burden to be gotten rid of.

Thus one can see that the general motive in almsgiving is to derive personal benefit. The urge is a selfish one and no act having such multiple urges can be withheld without external compulsion. The legal way is the only way out. And the experience of other countries shows clearly that the problem cannot be solved unless the beggar is compelled by legislation to quit the streets, and enter institutions provided for him. We shall here take the example of a few countries and examine their methods of tackling the problem.

Vagrancy Control in England.—"In Tudor times attempts were made by law to check almsgiving in so far as it encouraged idleness and vagrancy;[1] and as late as 1744 (17 George II) a law was passed exposing to a penalty of not less than 10s. or more than 40s. (or, in default, one month's detention in a house of correction), any person who knowingly gave to a rogue or vagabond lodging or a shelter and refrained from handing him over to a constable."[2]

The problem of beggary is intimately linked up with the

1 Statute of 27 Henry VIII, c. 25.

2 Dawson, William H., *The Vagrancy Problem*, p. 91.

problem of employment and poor relief. Industrial England has guarded against the possibilities of dire poverty, starvation and beggary by a system of Poor Laws, Unemployment Acts and Social Insurance Schemes. "The first *public* social service to be established in England and Wales was the Poor Law. The great economic changes of the 15th and 16th centuries, above all the enclosure of arable land for sheep pastures and the expansion of urban industry and commerce, gave rise to problems with which medieval institutions were incapable of dealing. Feudal society was breaking up, and the landless men who began to rove the countryside and people the towns could not be provided for their adversity by voluntary almsgiving or through the mutual assistance funds of decaying guilds. Some statutory provision was needed and, after a period of local experiment characteristic of English social history, a national system of poor relief was brought into being towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth. The great Act which consolidated the Elizabethan Poor Law was passed in 1601 and, although the administrative details have been profoundly modified during the last 340 years, it remains—in principle—the basis of our system of providing for those who have no other means of support."[1]

In the year 1937 out of a total of about five hundred million pounds spent by Britain on what are known as Public Social Services, more than three hundred million pounds were spent on poor relief, housing, widows, orphans and old age pensions, health insurance, unemployment insurance and allowances. It is the expenditure on these items that helps them to solve their beggar problem. It takes a network of public social services to tackle poverty in all its ugly aspects.

In Europe.—It is noteworthy that, irrespective of the form of Government a country may have, the treatment of the vagrant has been carried out most systematically on the Continent. In the Swiss Republic this question is regulated by Cantonal Laws. The Federal Legislation on the subject, dating from 1850, merely orders that vagrants and mendicants shall be dealt with in the Cantons in which they may be arrested in accordance with the

1 Owen, A. D., *British Social Services*, p. 6.

laws of those Cantons, yet adding that, if of foreign nationality, they shall be expelled from the country. The law in force in the Canton of Berne, for example, states that:—

> "Vagrancy, namely, the wandering from place to place of persons without means and without the object of obtaining honest employment, is punishable with imprisonment and hard labour not exceeding sixty days, or with committal to a labour institution for a term between six months and two years; on the repetition of the offence the vagrant is always to be committed to a labour institution."

Persons who apply for help from a Relief Station and refuse to accept suitable work when offered to them may be treated as 'shirkers' and as such they are liable to detention in a labour institution for any period between several months and several years. The police are empowered to arrest beggars without special warrant, and the husbands and fathers who evade their domestic responsibilities, and even the town loafer, who hangs about the street corners, may be apprehended and committed to a Forced Labour House by a very summary process.

Germany, so dissimilar in its form of Government from Switzerland, has dealt with beggary on similar lines. Down to the 16th century, Germany was satisfied with the mere prohibition of mendicant practices. A resolution of the Diet at Landau in 1497 simply forbade vagabondage, and ordered the authorities to exercise supervision over the beggars of all kinds. In 1532 Emperor Charles V in Article 30 of this Penal Court Ordinance similarly enjoined the authorities to "exercise vigilant oversight over beggars and vagrants," and in 1557 the Imperial Police Ordinance sanctioned the issue of begging letters to poor people for whose support local funds did not exist. Inspite of these prohibitive orders, beggary was a terrible nuisance as late as the end of the 18th century. Then it was that the idea of the disciplinary treatment of the vagrant took root and special institutions came into existence known as Labour Houses. When the Empire was established, the practice of the various states was embodied in the Imperial Penal Code, and Labour House treatment is now the recognised mode of

correcting sloth, loafing and habitual intemperance and immorality throughout Germany.[1]

Sections 361 and 362 of the Penal Code define as follows the offences which may entail detention in a Labour House:—

(1) Whoever wanders about as a vagabond.

(2) Whoever begs or causes children to beg or neglects to restrain from begging such persons as are under his control and oversight and belong to his household.

(3) Whoever is so addicted to gambling, drunkenness, or idleness that he falls into such a condition as to be compelled to seek public help himself, or for those for whose maintenance he is responsible.

(4) Any female who is placed under police control owing to professional immorality when she acts contrary to the police regulations issued in the interest of health, public order, and public decency, or who without being under such control, is guilty of professional immorality.

(5) Any person who, while in receipt of public relief, refuses, out of sloth, to do such work suited to his strength as the authorities may offer him.

(6) Any person who, after losing his past lodging, fails to procure another within the time allotted to him by the competent authority and who cannot prove that inspite of his best endeavours he has been unable to do so.

It should be noted that begging according to this law is a cognizable offence; that not only the beggar but one who encourages begging is also liable to punishment; that all begging and not only importunate begging is punishable by law. (We shall later point out the similarity between the wide definition of the term 'vagrant' given in this law and that of the Cochin Vagrancy Bill.)

Belgium's Beggars' Depots and Houses of Refuge.—Only after experimenting in many directions did the legislation of Belgium

1 We are not able to secure information regarding conditions of vagrancy during the Hitler regime. But we have reason to believe that no appreciable change is effected in this sphere by Hitler, at least, no change for the worse.

for the treatment of vagrants and mendicants establish Labour Houses and Colonies for the detention of these offenders. Between 1793 and 1891 the Vagrancy Laws went through a process of progressive severity. But on the 27th of November, 1891, the existing law was so amended as to take away from these offences their penal character. At the present time the beggar, the tramp, and the loafer are dealt with under this law. The great difference between the original Belgian Labour Houses and the Beggars' Depots of today lies in the fact that the earlier institutions were managed by philanthropic agencies, while those existing today are State establishments, and form a part of the judicial system of the country.

The Belgian law makes it obligatory upon the State to establish three different types of correctional institutions for the vagrants and mendicants, *viz.*, Beggars' Depots, Houses of Refuge and Reformatory Schools. The Beggars' Depots are for able bodied vagrants and professional beggars, and for those who, due to idleness, drunkenness or immorality, live in a state of vagrancy. They can be sentenced to detention in these Depots for a period ranging between two years and seven years. The Houses of Refuge and Reformatory Schools are for simple detention. In order to give the loafer a chance of voluntary reformation, he is on the first conviction sent to a House of Refuge by way of probation for a period not exceeding one year or until he has earned 12s. If reconvicted he is sent to the Beggars' Depot. In general the House of Refuge is intended for vagrants, mendicants, loafers and dissolute persons who deserve lighter punishment than that given to incorrigible offenders.

Article 2, para 3 of the said Act lays down that :—

> "The Reformatory Schools shall be devoted to persons who are under eighteen years of age and who have been placed by the judicial authority at the disposal of the Government or whose admission has been applied for by the authority of the commune."

The Act provides that the Minister of Justice may order the immediate discharge of any person confined in the Beggars' Depots whose further confinement may appear to him

unnecessary. Provision is made not only for the separate lodging of those below 21 in the Depots but also for the externment of adult and able-bodied beggars not belonging to Belgium.

These few instances of the nature and progress of law relating to vagrancy in Europe go to show that their problem is essentially the same everywhere. They prove beyond doubt that short of penal measures the beggar problem is impossible of solution. They make clear the futility of private efforts to get rid of the beggar. The experience of the West also indicates the desirability of organising charity for the good of the community aided or regulated by State legislation.

Laws in India Applicable to Vagrancy.— Organised public opinion in India has expressed itself in favour of State action against begging since the beginning of the century. The Bombay Corporation has shown interest in the problem since 1915. The Calcutta Corporation has been vocal on the subject since about 1918. Apart from the Corporations, public bodies like the Women's Associations, Social Service Leagues and various other agencies have been advocating State action.

In India, though there is no full fledged Vagrancy Act as yet, it cannot be said that there is no legal provision for preventing public begging. Before we discuss the recent Bills and Acts, we shall consider the available local Acts and regulations which, we are told, could be used for checking public begging. To begin with, there is the Criminal Procedure Code which applies to the whole of British India and it is maintained that Section 109 could be used to arrest a beggar. According to this Section, if a Magistrate is satisfied—

(a) "that any person is taking precautions to conceal his presence within the local limits of each Magistrate's jurisdiction and that there is reason to believe that such person is taking such precautions with a view to committing any offence, or

(b) "that there is within such limits a person who has no ostensible means of subsistence, or who cannot give a satisfactory account of himself," that person may be arrested.

Though a vagrant might have been arrested now and again under this section, it has been applied till now only for rounding

up 'bad characters.' It does not really cover the beggar. B. B. Mitra in his edition of the *Code of Criminal Procedure* (pp. 169) quoting a judgment,'[1] shows that "merely to be out of work or penniless is not an offence. Many an honest man may find himself in either predicament, and in a country where there are workless people and no workhouses, persons ought not to be exposed to proceedings under Section 109 (b) merely because they cannot give a satisfactory account of the manner in which they are eking out a precarious existence." Further, till begging is legally forbidden begging itself could be stated to be his 'ostensible means of living.' Hence the Section cannot be of much use in prosecuting a beggar.

The European Vagrancy Act.—Then there is the European Vagrancy Act, 1874, which applies to the whole of India but takes care only of the European vagrant. According to Section 3 of this Act,

> " Vagrant " means a person of European extraction found asking for alms or wandering about without any employment or visible means of subsistence."

whereas Section 23 lays down that

> " Any person of European extraction found asking for alms when he has sufficient means of subsistence, or asking for alms in a threatening or insolent manner, or continuing to ask for alms of any person after he has been required to desist, shall be punishable whether he be or be not a European British subject, on conviction before a Magistrate, with rigorous imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month for the first offence, two months for the second and three months for any subsequent offence."

A 'vagrant,' according to the Act, may be sent to a workhouse or removed from British India at Government expense, whereas a beggar, as defined by Section 23, can be given rigorous imprisonment from one to three months. Just 'asking for alms' is vagrancy, and asking for alms in a particular manner and in certain circumstances amounts to begging. It is strange that this Act does not make any mention of the juvenile

1 Victor *v.* K. E. 53 Cal. 345, 30 C. W. N. 380, 27 Cr. L. J. 497.

vagrant. In the absence of a specific provision for dealing with him, it may be presumed that he will be treated in the same manner as the adult. Further, this Act neither recognises the possibility of a European vagrant being disabled or suffering from any infectious disease nor provides specifically for women vagrants. When a European vagrant is arrested every effort is required to be made by Magistrates and the Police to find a suitable employment for him. In the meanwhile he is placed in a Government workhouse. If within a reasonable period of time no job is found for him, he is removed from India at Government expense.

The Lepers Act.—We may now turn our attention to the Lepers Act. The number of leper beggars in India is very large. If only the Lepers Act of 1898 had been applied effectively the problem would have been well on the way to solution by now. It is an Act of the Central Government, with liberty to the Provincial Governments to bring it into force if and when they desired. Unfortunately, no Provincial Government has taken full advantage of the Act for controlling lepers in its area. The Act takes special notice of the 'pauper leper' whom it defines as "a leper who publicly solicits alms or exposes or exhibits any sores or wounds or bodily ailment or deformity with the object of exciting charity or of obtaining alms, or who is at large without any ostensible means of subsistence." Such a person can be arrested by any police officer without a warrant; after the Inspector of Lepers certifies him to be a leper, he is to be produced before a Magistrate who can send him to a leper asylum to be detained until discharged by order of the Board or the District Magistrate.

Section 9 of the Act merits quotation, for we consider it a very important preventive measure against the spread of the disease. It reads thus:—

> "The Local Government may, by notification, in the Official Gazette, order that no leper shall, within any area specified under section 3,
>
> (a) personally prepare for sale or sell any article of food

or drink or any drugs or clothing inten human use; or

(b) bathe, wash clothes or take water from or tank debarred by any municipal or from use by lepers; or

(c) drive, conduct or ride in any public carriage plying for hire other than a railway carriage; or

(d) exercise any trade or calling which may by such notifications be prohibited to lepers."

Penalty for disobeying this Section of the Act is fine upto Rs. 20/-. Any one who knowingly employs a leper in any of the trades mentioned in Section 9, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to Rs. 50/-. Thus this Act makes provision not only for punishing the leper who spreads the disease but also those who permit a leper to do so.

The C. P. Municipalities Act.- In addition to the above, there are some Sections of the Municipalities Act in each Province which deal with the beggar. It has been suggested that action could be taken under these Sections. In certain cities the Police Acts provide sections which are similar to the relevant sections in the Municipalities Act. Section 206 of the the C. P. Municipalities Act, 1922, runs as follows:-

"Whoever, in any street or public place within the limits of a Municipality, begs importunately for alms or exposes or exhibits, with the object of exciting charity, any deformity or disease, or any offenvsie sore or wound, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to twenty rupees."

This Section is the most unhelpful among similar provisions in other cities and provinces. When a beggar is found to be begging importunately, a police officer will have to get a warrant of arrest, and then, when produced before the Court, the Magistrate can sentence him to a fine which may extend to twenty rupees. 'Importunate' begging is very hard to prove; by the time a warrent is brought to arrest the beggar, he will not be there to receive it; even if one succeeded in getting him before the Court, the punishment provided is neither deterrent nor corrective. The C. P. Government is therefore considering

a Bill to amend this Section. The Bill contains proposals for making begging a cognisable offence. But it has retained the word 'importunate' in its first draft and representations are being made by the Society for the Elimination of Beggary in Nagpur to delete the word. Fine or/and imprisonment of either description or detention in a Poor House is prescribed. There is no provision, however to punish those who encourage begging or those who employ children to beg. The power of prosecution is vested in the police and there is a suggestion that the Magistrates (as on the lines of Section 190 C. P. C.) as well as Municipal employees of certain rank (as in the U. P. Amendment Act) be empowered to take cognizance of the offence.

The Punjab Municipal Act.—Among the provisions to control beggary, the Punjab Municipal Act, 1911, Section 151, as it stands at present is reasonably satisfactory. The relevant portions are given below :—

"151. (1) Whoever, in any street or public place within the Municipality, begs (importunately) for alms, or exposes or exhibits, with the object of exciting charity, any deformity or disease, or any offensive sore or wound, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description, which may extend to three months, or with fine not exceeding fifty rupees, or with both, provided that—

(a) In the case of a first offence, the court may, if it think fit, instead of sentencing the convict to any punishment, release him after due admonition;

(b) in any case, the court may, if it is satisfied of the inability of the convict to earn a livelihood, owing to physical infirmity or debility, and if the person in charge of any Poor House in the Municipality certifies that he is willing to receive him, direct that the convict be received into such Poor House, after being released on entering into a bond, with or without sureties, to appear and receive sentence, when called upon during such period not exceeding three years, as the court may direct.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Code of

Criminal Procedure, 1898, an offence punishable under this section shall be cognizable; and notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, a court may take cognizance of such an offence in the manner provided by Section 190, C. P. C. 1898."

Much of the effect of this Section is lost by the qualifying word 'importunately.' Apart from the fact that it provides for imprisonment which may extend to three months and/or a fine not exceeding fifty rupees, it provides for admonition and release for the first offence. As per Section 151, (1) (b) the court does not sentence him to detention in a Poor House. But in case a Poor House is willing to take him in, the court permits his entry there after having signed a bond for good behaviour for a period not exceeding three years. This method of tackling the beggar is not to be found in any of the other relevant Sections. Though this provision could be used to check begging in the Punjab no attempt is, however, being made in that direction.

The Bombay City Police Act.—Turning now to other provinces, we find that Section 121 of the Bombay City Police Act, Section 64 of the Bangalore Police Law and the Bangalore Municipal Bye-law N. 21, Section 13-A, are very similar. They both penalise not only importunate begging but all begging; they penalise not merely those who beg but also those who direct begging or employ children under their control to beg; they provide for imprisonment which may extend to one month as an alternative to, or in addition to, a fine not exceeding fifty rupees. It can be clearly seen that these Municipal provisions and the Police Acts are such that they could be made use of to prevent begging if amended in certain respects. It is equally true that unless we pass a complete Vagrancy Act the problem will not be solved. But to make a beginning, some Provinces have amended their legal provisions and in others amendments are under consideration.

The Madras City Police Act. 1888.—This Act was amended by the Madras Government (by the Governor while acting under Section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935) on the 13th

May, 1941. Any Police Officer may arrest a beggar found begging, without a warrant, and the court may sentence the beggar to imprisonment which may extend to one month or/and fine him not exceeding fifty rupees, or in case there is a Workhouse he may be sentenced to detention there for a period not exceeding three years. If the accused is below 16 years of age, he shall be tried by the Juvenile Court. The Act provides for Workhouses for the detention of the able-bodied and 'special homes' for the detention of those who are 'not physically capable of manual labour.'

The existence of the Madras Children Act, 1920, is fully recognized by the framers of this amendment to the Police Act. The ordinary courts are not allowed to try juveniles below 16 years. It is now the function of the Juvenile Court. Since a difference is made between children who are below 14 and those who are between 14 and 16, the punishment it gives to the latter group is practically the same as that given to the adult beggar, that is, they may be sentenced to Workhouse and special homes. But,

> 71-K (2). "If the Juvenile Court finds on enquiry that any person brought before it under sub-section (1) has not attained the age of 14 years and is guilty of an offence under Section 71-A and that he:—(a) has no home or settled place of abode or visible means of subsistence, or has no parent or guardian, or has a parent or guardian who does not exercise proper guardianship, or (b) is destitute and both his parents or his surviving parent or in the case of an illegitimate child, his mother, are or is undergoing transportation or imprisonment, or (c) is under the care of a parent or guardian who by reason of criminal or drunken habits is unfit to have such care, the Court may pass such order in respect of the offender as it could have passed if he had been brought before it under sub-section (1) of Section 29 of the Madras Children Act, 1920."

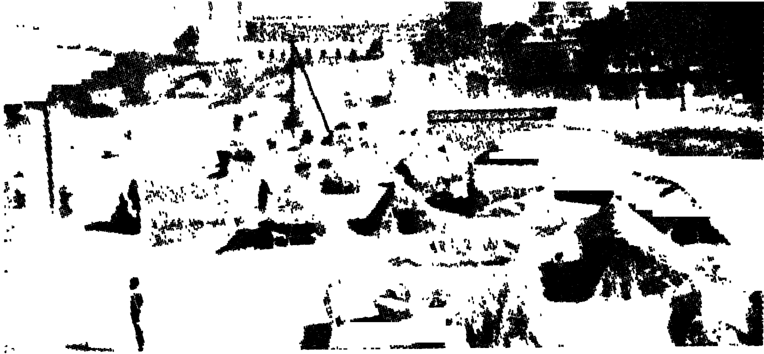
The main defect of the Act seems to lie in the fact that Section 71-C makes it clear that the operative sections of this amendment will come into force only after Workhouses and

spécial homes have come into existence. It is probably because of this that, though Madras happens to be the first in India to take steps to provide adequate legal powers to check beggary, it is not the first to start the experiment.

The U.P. Municipalities Act.—In the United Provinces it was found that Section 248 of the Municipalities Act, 1916, if amended, would enable the immediate tackling of street begging in U. P. Public enthusiasm on this matter was aroused by the efforts of the Social Service League. Realising that social legislation in this country can be enacted only by organising public opinion, the Social Service League, after starting a Poor House and finding that beggars will not voluntarily seek admission, sought the aid of legislation. In the absence of a responsible legislature, it was found that it was easier to get the existing legislation amended than to get a full-fledged Vagrancy Act, however desirable it may be, passed by a legislative body. Thus the movement for amending the Act began. Section 248 of the U. P. Municipalities Act made importunate begging punishable with fine which may extend to twenty rupees. The U. P. Municipalities (Amendment) Act, 1942, was Gazetted on the 11th April, 1942.

According to this Amendment importunate begging is made a cognizable offence. The court may sentence the accused to imprisonment which may extend to one month or to a fine not exceeding fifty rupees or both; or in places where the Municipality has recognised a Poor House, the court may sentence him to detention to a maximum period of two years. The Rules clearly recognise the existence of various types of beggars each of which requires specialised treatment. Rule 4 provides that:—

> "A Poor House shall have one or more of the following main sections:—(a) Infirmary for the decrepit, disabled and diseased, suffering from non-infectious and non-contagious diseases. (b) Section for beggars suffering from infectious and contagious diseases. (c) Juvenile Section. (d) Workhouse or Agricultural Colony for the able-bodied. In each section separate arrangement shall be made for



Beggars' Colony



Here they live—Disease and Beggars





Widowed Motherhood

each sex. More sections may be opened as necessary."

Though this Act does not specifically mention 'admonition' for the first offence, it is observed that in practice the Magistrate does release persons after admonition if they are first offenders, and whenever he considers such action to be more effective than detention in a Poor House.

An important feature of this Act is the acceptance of the principle of Indeterminate Sentence. A Revision Board, consisting of the District Magistrate, Municipal Chairman and a representative of the Poor House, is empowered to revise the sentence of the trying Magistrate. After his admission to the Poor House, if it is satisfied that "a beggar has developed the will to work or has found means of livelihood other than begging—and in general there are circumstances justifying a revision of his sentence—it shall reduce the sentence or direct his release." It will be noticed that a similar provision is made in the Belgian Law of 1891, where the Minister of Justice is empowered to revise the sentence. In Germany the maximum period of detention permitted in a Labour House is two years, but it depends entirely on the vagrant himself to effect an earlier release by reforming his ways. The President or Prefect of District has the right to increase or reduce the sentence, but in practice the Director of the Labour House is the person who does it, for he can either recommend the reduction or enhancement of the sentence. But at the end of two years the accused must be released whether reformed or not.

The U. P. Municipalities Amendment Act is being enforced at present in Lucknow. No beggar has till now been sentenced to either imprisonment or fine but about 40 of them have been sentenced to detention for periods varying between six months and a year in the Lucknow Poor House, run by the Social Service League and recognised by the Lucknow Municipality.

Even cities which have no Poor Houses can enforce the Act and the courts could fine the offenders or send them to prison. Our experience at Lucknow convinces us of the fact that they need not wait till a Poor House is set up, but that if they arrested beggars and sentenced some to prison and released others after

admonition, a large number of those who do not need to beg for a living, will give up begging, and the rest will cease to be importunate. By the time a Poor House is founded, this preliminary effort could well pave the way for the initiation of a more complete programme of control.

One of the serious defects of this Amendment Act is that the word 'importunately' still remains. In order to make effective use of this Amendment this qualifying word must be removed. All begging and not only importunate begging must be made an offence. It is not easy to define or prove importunate begging.

I have found by experience that the Magistrate is willing to convict the person only if he was arrested when he was "actually begging". He interprets begging as vocally making appeals to people for help. But in actual practice the spirit and the purpose of such a Vagrancy Act would indicate that a beggar may be arrested when the prosecutor is satisfied that a person is a beggar. The Bengal Vagrancy Bill solves this difficulty by describing a beggar as one "asking for alms, wandering or remaining in a manner indicating existence by begging." A blind boy sits on the road side, silently, expecting alms from the public, a blind man squats on a bridge with his "*Angauchha*" spread out in his hands, silently asking the public to throw in coins into the outstretched cloth; a dumb beggar with his hands spread out walks slowly and silently through the Bazar; an able-bodied beggar, a few lepers and an old woman, all sit in a line near a temple expecting alms. In the opinion of a Magistrate these persons cannot be strictly convicted under the existing law. I do not think we need imagine that a person is begging only when he shouts for it. It is beyond doubt that every one of the persons mentioned above are professional beggars. A clever plea put forward by some beggars in Court is "I do not *ask* anybody for alms. If someone gives it to me, I take it." The U. P. Amendment Act must be so amended again as to include the types described above. The purpose of Vagrancy Legislation must be to prevent begging in all forms and not to afford loop

holes to clever beggars to escape through or for unimaginative Magistrates and Police to do hair-splitting.

In Lucknow it was found that according to the Act beggars were sent for detention in the Poor House for periods varying between 6 to 18 months. At the end of the period sentenced for, we must release a person whether he has found means of subsistence or not. This defeats the purpose of the Act. It would appear the U. P. Amendment Act should be amended in this respect on the lines of the Bengal Vagrancy (Ordinance) Act. No maximum period of detention should be fixed. A person must be released by the Revision Board only when they are guaranteed of the means of subsistence. Otherwise after a brief sojourn in the Poor House they will again take to begging, probably in another city.

Sind Vagrancy Bill.—On the 12th April, 1939, Mr. P. A. Bhopatkar introduced in the Sind Assembly " The Sind Vagrancy Bill," ' a bill to prohibit able-bodied vagrants from begging publicly on the streets '. The Bill defines a ' vagrant ' as a " person found wandering about and begging for alms ", but it deals only with the able-bodied beggar. Any police officer may arrest an able-bodied beggar, and the court can order his imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month for the first offence, not exceeding two months for the second offence and not exceeding one year for subsequent offences. If the accused says that he is likely to obtain employment in a given place, the court may order the police to conduct him to such a place. If he fails to get employed within 24 hours, he shall be brought back to the court which may punish him as mentioned above.

This Bill is very defective. The definition of ' vagrant ' is inadequate. It makes no provision for Work-houses. Even if the Bill dealt with the able-bodied beggars only, there is no reason why it should not provide for industrial and agricultural colonies for their retraining. Experience of the vagrant in Europe shows that imprisonment is no solution for the able-bodied beggar. He must be sent to specialised Workhouses where the beggar, without the disadvantage of being dubbed a ' criminal ', can be cured of his constitutional laziness.

The provision to allow him to seek for employment is very desirable. But, while the European vagrant gets fifteen days to seek work and also while the Act requires that the Presidency Magistrate or a First Class Magistrate shall assist the vagrant to the best of his ability in securing employment, the Sind Vagrancy Bill permits only 24 hours to find work and that too without the help of the Magistrate. Thus it will be seen that the Bill in its present form will serve little or no useful purpose.

Calcutta Suburban Police Act.—A comprehensive Vagrancy Bill is before the Bengal Assembly. It has been recently introduced in the Assembly as a Government Bill. But even before the Bill becomes Act, it is possible to arrest beggars under Clause 17 of Section 40 of the Calcutta Suburban Police Act, 1866. This Section empowers the police to arrest any beggar and sentence him to a fine not exceeding fifty rupees or imprison him in lieu of fine. The Provincial Government may declare any institution to serve as a Refuge Home for the reception of the aged, infirm or incurably diseased persons. In places where there is such a recognised Institution the court may sentence the beggar to detention for the period prescribed. Though no provision is made for any other special home or Workhouse for the different types of beggars, it is, as it stands, more satisfactory than the C. P. Municipalities Act, 1922, and the proposed Sind Vagrancy Bill.

Bengal Urban Poor Relief Bill.—In India Poor Law does not exist in a codified form as in the West. Therefore, the Bengal Urban Poor Relief Bill, 1940, must be considered an important step towards social legislation in our country. It is a Bill "to provide for relief of the poor in the Urban areas of Bengal". Within six months of this Act coming into force every Municipality in Bengal will have to prepare (a) a list showing names of all disabled persons suffering from leprosy or any other contagious disease, who have to rely on public charity for subsistence and have no other source of income or none else to support them; and (b) a list of other disabled persons including old and infirm persons and children below 12 who have to rely on public charity for their subsistence. It is made obligatory upon every

Municipality to segregate and maintain, if possible, all indigents in list (a). As for those in list (b) each Municipality is required to try and provide funds for their maintenance and, "until sufficient funds are provided for, shall take such steps as are necessary for guarding against starvation of such indigents including raising of voluntary contributions from members of the public, government or charitable institutions."

Most of the beggar problems in India would be solved if only such *Poor Relief Measures* were adopted. We would watch with keen interest Bengal's experiment in this important piece of legislation.

Bengal Vagrancy Bill.—Poor Relief does not, however, eliminate the need of a Vagrancy Act, and therefore Bengal has moved in the direction of a Bengal Vagrancy Bill.[1] Any person found asking for alms, or remaining or wandering about in any public place making it clear that he exists on public charity can be arrested by any police officer and taken before a Special Magistrate. If the Magistrate is so convinced, the person in custody may be certified as a vagrant and sent by the court to a Receiving Centre when a Medical Officer will examine him thoroughly and submit his report to the Officer-in-charge of the Centre who, under orders of the Vagrancy Controller, may send him over to a Vagrant Home. He will remain there till such time as the Controller may decide upon. The Vagrancy Controller in this Bill functions very much like the Revision Board in the U. P. Municipalities Amendment Act, 1942, and the Minister of Justice in Belgium.

It is wisely provided in the Bill that (a) lepers, (b) the insane or mentally deficient, (c) those suffering from communicable diseases other than leprosy, and (d) children, that is, persons under the age of fourteen, be segregated from each other and from vagrants who do not belong to any of the aforementioned classes. Moreover, it requires the segregation of the male from the female vagrants. It is also provided that such vagrants' homes may include provision for the teaching of agricultural, industrial or

1. Since this chapter was written, the Bengal Legislature passed the Bill and is now known as the Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943. Ed.

other pursuits, and for the general education and medical care of the inmates.

Much like the Continental Vagrancy Acts and the proposed Cochin Vagrancy Bill, this Bill also provides for the repatriation of non-Bengal beggars. It also punishes the person who "employs or causes any person to ask for alms, or abets the employment or the causing of a person to ask for alms, or whoever having the custody, charge or care of a child, connives at or encourages the employment or the causing of the child to ask for alms with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine or with both. Its chief feature is that the court does not sentence the beggar to a fixed period of detention in a Vagrants' Home, but leaves it to the Controller to release him when he considers that the purpose of the Act so far as the particular individual is concerned is fulfilled. This provision is a great improvement over the usual provision where a beggar has to be released after the expiry of his term of detention, whether reformed or not. It is reported that the Bengal Government has arranged for the building of six vagrants' homes. A Vagrancy Controller and six Managers for the Homes have already been appointed.

It is encouraging to note that some Indian States are also taking an active interest in the beggar problem. Hyderabad has already passed the Prevention of Beggary Act, 1942. Similarly, Mr. M. K. Devassy introduced the Cochin Vagrancy Bill in the Cochin Legislature on the 10th February, 1940, but, unfortunately, it was not accepted. Baroda has now constituted a committee to investigate the beggar problem and make proposals for its control and prevention. Though Travancore has no legislation dealing with vagrancy, a Beggar Relief Centre has been started in Kottayam at the initiation of the municipality and the citizens of the town. The Government of Mysore appointed a committee to go thoroughly into the question of beggary in the whole State and to formulate a plan for effectively dealing with the problem. The committee has just issued its Report and also the Draft Bill for the Prohibition of Beggary in Mysore.

Hyderabad Prevention of Beggary Act.—Unfortunately the

Hyderabad Act has several defects. It seems to be so framed as to make it almost impossible to admit a person to a Poor House. Powers of establishment, recognition and supervision of institutions for beggars are vested in a chief committee, which may be either the Standing Committee of the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation for the City of Hyderabad, or a Sub-Committee of five nominated by the Municipal Committee or the Local Board concerned.

Further, Sec. 7 (1) says that " The Chief Committee may establish institutions in suitable places .... or close down any institution established by the public." We cannot appreciate this idea of empowering the Committee to close down any public institution started for the benefit of beggars or poor people. It is expected, however, that the extreme step of closing down an institution would be taken only when strong reasons justify the adoption of such a measure.

Institutions, started or recognised or aided by the Chief Committee, can secure inmates in two ways :—firstly, they may accept those who voluntarily seek admission. But every such person must execute an agreement with the institution to remain in it for not less than two years. Thereafter he shall be subject to the same rules as apply to those who are committed to the institution by the court. Secondly, they may admit those whom the courts have sentenced to detention. Experience both in India and abroad makes it clear that voluntary admissions to a Poor House are negligible. When such admission amounts to voluntarily giving up of one's right to freedom, it is difficult to see how any institution may be expected to get volunteer inmates.

Admissions through the courts seem to us still more difficult. Sec. 16 provides that when a police officer sees a professional beggar begging, he should first ask him to refrain from begging and leave the place; and if this order is not complied with then the police officer is to arrest him *after holding a panchnama.* It is obvious that no beggar will ever contravene such a convenient order of a policeman. To ask a beggar not to beg at a given time and at a given place does not need a police officer. The beggar will obey any ordinary citizen. Granting that one finds

such a rare type of a beggar who insists on begging when ordered by the police officer to go away from there, the law requires the police officer to hold a *panchnama* and then arrest the beggar. Our experience of arresting beggars in Lucknow makes it clear to us that it is almost impossible to find persons who will agree to form the *panch* ; it will be still more difficult for the policeman to get such a *panchnama* to witness against a beggar. In our round-ups of beggars in Lucknow, whenever a beggar created a scene on his arrest, the public inevitably pleaded for his release.

Presuming for a moment that it is possible to find a police officer who will be so conscientious as to go through this difficult process of arresting the beggar, and granting that it is possible to find men willing to form the *panch*, it is difficult for the beggar to get across the court even if he is anxious to enter an institution. For the first offence the court may discharge a beggar if he promises not to beg again, and no beggar, as far as our knowledge goes, will refuse to give such an undertaking. If a beggar comes before the court for a second time " he shall not be discharged unless a respectable person stands surety for him that he will not be guilty of begging by profession, or unless the court is satisfied in some other way that he will refrain from it."

In case a beggar appears for the third time then the court may sentence him to detention in an institution, under the control or management of the Chief Committee, " for such period as is deemed sufficient to render him capable of earning a living for his necessaries." The Act does not mention the maximum period to which the court may sentence him. We may get a fuller idea if we see the Rules governing this Act. But it is not advisable to let the Rules prescribe such an important matter which involves a principle.

Dealing with persons who abscond from the institutions, Section 13 says that if such an escaped person is found by a police officer he may arrest him after holding *panchnama*. It is superfluous and unreasonable to require the certificate of a *panch* for the arrest of a person who is definitely wanted by law. Whether he is found begging or not, he is to be arrested if he has escaped from legal custody.

The Act does not reveal any clear idea of the need of specialised treatment for the various types of beggars. Throughout the term "professional beggar" is used. In the Definitions Clause the term is so defined that no clear cut differentiation is made between a beggar and a professional beggar. The Act makes provision neither for the punishment of those who encourage beggary, nor for the repatriation of those who are non-State beggars. Further, it gives no special consideration to the child beggar. The purpose of the Act evidently is prevention and not treatment.

Cochin Vagrancy Bill.—Now turning to the Cochin Vagrancy Bill we find that one of its most interesting features is its definition of the vagrant. Section 3(ii) says:—

> "Vagrant means (a) any person wandering abroad or placing himself in any public place to beg or gather alms or causing or encouraging or procuring any child to do so; (b) any person wandering abroad to hawk goods without a pedlar's license; (c) any person whose wilful neglect to work causes him or her or any of his or her family to go about begging; (d) any person running away, causing his child or wife to live upon charity; (d) any person endeavouring to procure alms by exposing deformities or by making fraudulent pretences; (f) any person found in a building or inside an enclosed yard or garden, for any immoral, unlawful purpose; (g) any person gaming, in an open and public place, at some game of chance with cards, coins and other instruments; (h) any person telling fortunes or using any subtle craft, palmistry or otherwise, to deceive; (i) any person wandering abroad, without visible means of subsistence, and lodging in unoccupied buildings, or under a tree or tent or in a cart, and not giving a good account of himself; (j) any person knowingly living, wholly or in part, on the earnings of prostitution, or persistently soliciting in public for immoral purposes."

According to this definition a beggar, a person encouraging a child to beg, an unlicenced hawker, a deserter, a gambler, a palmist, a prostitute and a pimp—all are "vagrants" and

can be taken action against under this Act. Sub-section (f) of this definition makes it possible for a respectable political worker to be termed a vagrant if at a given time a political party or association of which he is a member is declared illegal and he is found working for such party in a building or in an enclosed yard or garden. It is difficult also to understand how an unlicensed hawker and a palmist can be considered as vagrants. Apart from this too wide a definition of a vagrant, the Bill in general is a very desirable one. All begging is made a cognizable offence. The Government is required to establish Receiving Centres and Institutions for the accommodation and treatment of vagrants. Due attention is paid to the different types of beggars. The general procedure of arrest and conviction is on the same lines as the Bengal Vagrancy Bill.

That professional organisations exist among beggars and that some so-called respectable citizens employ beggars to beg in public and take a part of their earnings in turn for food and protection from the police have been pointed out elsewhere in this book. It looks as if Sec. 18 (1) of the Cochin Vagrancy Bill is meant to attack this system. It reads as follows: —

> "Whenever it shall appear to the Commissioner of Police that any person is living on the earnings of vagrants within the local areas to which this is made applicable, he shall make a report to the Government with the recommendation that such person be deported out of Cochin."

The Government then may arrest him, and after a trial in camera may deport him from Cochin for a specified period of time. Such a provision is not found in any other Act either in India or in the West. An ideal Vagrancy Act will do well to include this provision. Another of its interesting features is that a beggar, who is not a *bona fide* resident of Cochin, may be repatriated from Cochin only after he had stayed for three months in a Receiving Centre and had failed to find employment within that period.

Those causing children to beg may be sentenced to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term which may

extend to two years, or to a fine not exceeding 500 rupees, or both. But unfortunately the Bill proposes to leave the question of prescribing the maximum period of detention permitted in any institution to the Rules. So important a matter should be included in the Act itself, for it will then ensure the acceptance of a general principle in regard to detention.

Mysore Draft Bill for the Prohibition of Beggary.—This Bill contains several interesting features. It provides for the creation of a Central Relief Committee, the establishment of Receiving Centres and institutions to meet the needs of different types of beggars, classification of beggars, formation of colonies or social settlements on the village community model where agriculture and cottage industries will be taught, and the repatriation of non-Mysorian beggars at Government cost.

Religious mendicant is included in the definition of 'beggar' but a provision in the Bill excludes him from this category under certain conditions. With reference to this, Section 2 (d) states :—

"A person shall not be deemed to be a beggar if he (i) is a religious mendicant licensed by the Central Relief Committee to solicit alms in the manner prescribed by rules under this Act ; or (ii) in performance of any religious vow or obligation as sanctioned by custom or religion collects alms in a private or public place, without being a nuisance ; or (iii) is permitted in writing by the Central Relief Committee to collect alms from the public for any public institution, whether religious or secular, or for the furtherance of any object for the good of the public.

Thus religious mendicants may be permitted to beg under a licence granted by the Central Relief Committee on the recommendation of the Head of the Religious Order to which they belong provided they beg without causing nuisance to the public. This is a novel provision not found in any other vagrancy legislation, and is meant for the purpose of regulating religious mendicancy with due regard to the sentiments of the people. In practice, it is hoped, it would do credit to the good intentions of the framers of the law.

The Bill does not provide for Workhouses but for colonies of the village community type. The colony will take in only

the able-bodied, the aged, the juvenile, the lame, the cripple and the blind. The Scheme includes a separate Sick Ward for the treatment of the sick, a Correctional Ward for the unruly and the " work-shy " and a Rescue Home for the profligate women. It is interesting to note that there is also a suggestion for a colony for the mentally defective and insane beggars to be attached to the Mysore Government Mental Hospital.

Special attention is given to the child beggar. The provisions of the Bill are as hereunder :—

(1) If a person arrested under the provisions of this Act is, in the opinion of the officer arresting him, below the age of twelve years, he shall without delay be removed to the Receiving Centre, whereupon the Officer-in-Charge of the Receiving Centre shall, after preliminary enquiry, place him before the Magistrate and, if the Magistrate after summary enquiry finds that he—

(*a*) has no home or settled place or abode or means of subsistence or, has no parent or guardian, or has a parent or guardian who does not exercise a proper wardship ; or

(*b*) is a destitute and both his parents or his surviving parent, or in the case of an illegitimate child, his mother, are or is undergoing imprisonment ; or

(*c*) is under the care of a parent or guardian who by reason of the criminal or drunken habits is unfit to exercise such care ;

shall declare the person to be a beggar and send him to the Receiving Centre :

Provided that if such a person has a parent or a proper guardian, the Magistrate shall call upon that parent or guardian to execute a bond and stand surety for that person not committing an act contrary to the provisions of Section 3 and thereafter release him, but if that parent or guardian himself is a beggar, and no other relative comes forward to take care of the person, he shall be sent to the Receiving Centre with a declaration as provided therein.

(2) If in the course of the enquiry, the Magistrate is of opinion that the parent or guardian, being competent to maintain the child, has wilfully neglected to do so, he may in his order

committing such child to the Receiving Centre direct that such amount as he may deem necessary for the maintenance of the child be recovered by way of fine from such person or guardian.

(3) The Officer-in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall thereupon send the child to such Institution best suited for him.

It is suggested that a normal child beggar should not be separated from its parent, that the beggar family should be lodged in one hut in the Colony and that the foster-parent system may be introduced in the Colony for Children without parents.

Another interesting feature is that the Bill provides for Indoor and Outdoor Relief. The former is relief given in any Institution under the Act and the latter is relief in cash or kind or both. The latter provision is made to take care of those who are real destitutes but are ashamed to beg and actually starve rather than beg in the open street—such cases can only be treated by Outdoor Relief. This method, however, is to be adopted only in the case of those deserving needy who do not need institutional care but outdoor help to prevent them from begging, and that too, with the approval of Government.

To meet the expenses of the Scheme there is to be a Beggar Relief Fund but it is not to be raised by taxation. Section 36 reads :—

" In order to carry out the purposes of this Act, a fund called the Central Relief Fund shall be formed. This Fund shall consist of :—(i) Subscriptions and donations; (ii) Grants from Government General Revenues, Muzrai or other sources; (iii) Grants from Local Boards, such as District Boards, Municipalities and *Panchayets*, and other private or public Institutions; (iv) Fines recoverd under this Act; (v) Other sources, if any.

The supervision, direction and control of all matters relating to the administration of relief over the whole State is vested, according to this Bill, in the Central Relief Committee to be constituted by Government.

Points for an Ideal Vagrancy Act.—As India gains experience by experimenting with these various Acts dealing with the beggar, it should be possible to evolve an ideal Vagrancy Act to be passed by the Central Government, and to be put into force

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF LEGISLATION

Name of Law	Punishment	Offence : Cognizable or Non-Cognizable ?
1. The Madras City Police (Amendment) Act, 1941. (Amendment to Madras Act III of 1888).	Fine upto Rs. 50/- or imprisonment upto one month or Workhouse upto 3 years.	Cognizable.
2. The U. P. Act No. VIII of 1942. The U. P. Municipalities (Amendment) Act, 1942. (Amendment to Sec. 248 of the U. P. Mun. Act.)	Fine upto Rs. 50/- or imprisonment upto one month or both or Poor House upto two years.	Cognizable.
3. The Prevention of Beggary Act, 1941—Hyderabad-Deccan.	Detention in an Institution for a period sufficient to render him capable of earning a living.	Legally it is cognizable, but in practice it is non-cognizable.
4. The European Vagrancy Act, 1874.	A "Vagrant' sent to Workhouse till employment is found or till he is removed from Br. India. A "Beggar"—R. I. for one month for 1st offence and 3 months for subsequent offences.	Cognizable.
5. The Lepers Act 1898.	In Leper Asylum until discharged by the Board or the District Magistrate.	Pauper leper may be arrested without warrant.
6. The Cochin Vagrancy Bill.	The Rules to prescribe period of detention (See Sec. 13 (1) (G).)	Cognizable.
7. The Bengal Vagrancy Bill 1943.	To remain in Vagrant Home till Controller finds work for him, or relative or friend stands security.	Cognizable.
8. The Sind Vagrancy Bill 1938. (Private Bill by P. A. Bhopatkar).	Imprisonment upto 1 month for 1st offence, 3 months for 2nd offence, 1 year for subsequent offences.	Cognizable.
9. The Bombay City Police Act, Sec. 121.	Imprisonment upto one month or fine upto Rs. 50/- or both.	
10. The Bangalore Police Law, Sec. 64.	Imprisonment upto one month or fine upto Rs. 50/- or with both.	
11. The Punjab Mun. Act of 1911, Sec. 151.	Fine upto Rs. 50/- or imprisonment upto 3 months or both, or 1st offence admonition.	Cognizable.
12. The C.P. Municipalities Act, 1922, Sec. 206.	Fine upto Rs. 20/-	Non-Cognizable.
13. The Draft Bill for the Prohibition of Beggary in Mysore, 1943.	Detention in the Colony for re-training till the beggar is found capable of earning his own livelihood. Aim not penal but educative.	Cognizable.

IN INDIA RELATING TO BEGGARY

Nature of Offence	Punishment to Abbettor	Prosecuting Authority	Child Age Limit	Externment.
Begging or applying for alms.	None	Police Officer.	Below 16	None.
Begging importunately.	None.	(1) Police (2) Such Municipal employees as are authorised by the Mun. Bd. In Lucknow the Sanitary Inspectors.	Below 16 years.	None.
Begging anywhere.		Any Officer, or police official can arrest after holding a *panchnama*.		
Asking for alms when he has sufficient means of subsistence; or in a threatening manner, or importunately. (See Sec. 23).		Any Police Officer.		Extenrment at Government cost if he has no employment.
One who appears to be a pauper leper.	He who employs a leper in a trade can be fined upto Rs. 50/-.	Any Police Officer		
Begging.	Any person living on the earnings of vagrants deported out of Cochin.	Police Officer.	"A Minor" 16 years.	If work for able bodied non-Cochin is not found within 3 months, he may be repatriated.
Asking for alms, wandering or remaining in a manner indicating existence by begging.	R. I. upto 2 years or fine or both.	Any Police Officer authorised by Commissioner of Police or the D. M.	Under 14 years.	Non-Bengalis to be repatriated.
Wandering about and begging.		Any Police Officer.		
Begging or directing or permitting children under his control to beg.	Imprisonment upto 1 month or fine upto Rs. 50/- or both.	Police Officer.		
Begs or permits children under his control to beg or to apply for alms.	Imprisonment upto one month or fine upto Rs. 50/- or both.	Police Officer.		
Begging importunately.		Police Officer.		
Begging importunately.				
Begging in Public place, soliciting alms, wandering from door to door or exhibiting sores etc., for securing alms. Religious mendicant if he is a nuisance and not licensed by the Central Relief Committee.	Punished with simple or rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to 3 months or with fine or both.	Police Officer and others authorized under the Bill.	Under the age of 12 years; young boys and girls upto the age of 18 are also placed under thi category.	Non-Mysorian beggars to be repatriated at Government cost.

by Provincial Governments if and when they decide to do so.

There are some important points which, in my opinion, should be covered by a model legislation, and they are as follows :

(1) All begging, and not merely importunate begging, should be made an offence.

(2) Begging should be made a cognizable offence.

(3) The power to take cognizance of public begging should be vested in (a) the police, (b) the magistracy, and (c) such officers as may be authorised by the Municipal Boards. We would also suggest that certain members of public social organisations, under certain conditions and rules, be authorised to arrest beggars. (There is precedence for such a practice in the S. P. C. A.).

(4) Not only the person who begs, but also the one who gives alms should be punished. None of the Indian Bills proposed or Acts passed deal directly with the almsgiver. In 1899 the Canton of Schwyz, in democratic Switzerland, passed a law making " persons who by giving alms, favour begging from house to house or in the street " liable to a fine of ten francs. Similarly, a police ordinance was issued some time ago in the Ulezen district of Prussia to the effect that " giving of alms of any kind whatever to mendicant vagrants is prohibited on pain of a fine not exceeding nine marks." There is no reason why in India if begging is forbidden giving of alms should not be prohibited.

(5) A model Act should pay, as some of our legal measures do, special attention to the protection of the child beggar. Punishment of those who cause children to beg must be one of its provisions.

(6) Care should be taken to define clearly the different types of beggars to be treated in special institutions. There is a tendency to regard all beggars as requiring identical treatment.

The Bengal Vagrancy Bill, the U. P. Municipalities Amendment Act, 1942, and the Mysore Draft Bill show a fairly clear classification of beggars. Upon such classification will depend to a large extent the programme of individualized treatment. The Bombay Children's Act has taken care of delinquent children as no other province in India has done and the Chembur Children's Home is well worth following as a model for a home for destitute

and delinquent children. We do not mean to suggest that the Chembur Home is an example of perfection, but taking our cue from that Institution we can build better.

If the beggar problem is to be tackled successfully we must establish an ideal Workhouse for able-bodied beggars. Nowhere in India does such an institution exist.

(7) As regards the leper beggars, instead of attempting to tackle them under a Vagrancy Act, public opinion should influence Government to enforce the Lepers Act of 1898. Pauper lepers can well be taken care of by that Act as there is an All-India Leprosy Association with its branches in each province and most districts. Wherever special agencies exist it will be advisable for bodies interested in vagrancy not to cover the same ground but co-operate with them. This is an accepted principle in modern social work as it saves time, energy and expense, and, further, promotes united effort by eliminating unwholesome rivalry.

(8) Provision should be made for the externment of beggars who do not belong to the place where they are arrested.

(9) In regard to the establishment of institutions for various types of beggars, we would suggest the following methods for each Province. In every town and city of a province there should be a Receiving Centre. In every Province there should be one central Children's Home, a Labour Colony, a Leper Asylum and a Leper Hospital, a Hospital for those suffering from infectious diseases, all situated in one city, preferably the capital of the Province. The Receiving Centre in each city will also function as an Infirmary for the maintenance and care of the infirm.

We suggest this plan for we do not think it is financially a feasible proposition to have a ring of all these homes in each city. Such organised province-wide solution of the beggar problem is possible only if the Vagrancy Act provided for some such measures in the Act itself.

(10) Considering the fact that among the large population of beggars in India a good many suffer from hereditary defects as are likely to be transmitted to their children, it would be

desirable to provide for the sterilization of such persons under the advice and guidance of expert medical men.

(11) Segregation of sexes is provided for in most of the Bills proposed and Acts passed. While segregation of sexes is necessary, no concern is shown anywhere, except in the Mysore Draft Bill, to the possibility of an entire family begging and being arrested. In case a husband and wife are arrested either together or separately, the Act should permit the provision of family quarters in institutions meant for the beggars. If they have children of tender age they may be allowed to stay with the parents.

So far as the Infirmary is concerned too much fuss need not be made to keep the sexes rigidly segregated. The old and the infirm living together in their old age will remove some of the boredom natural to the life of a disciplined existence in an institution. We would like to see these homes for vagrants develop on the lines of the Settlements for the 'criminal tribes'.

(12) Much of the delay in coming to grips with the problem in various places is due to the question of finance involved. For years past a controversy has been going on between the Government and the Municipality as to who should shoulder the responsibility. In December 1938, an important discussion took place at the All-India Local Self Government Conference held at the Council Chamber of the Calcutta Corporation. Mr. B. N. Roy Choudhry in introducing the subject said:

> "The greatest difficulty of handling vagrancy in this country arises from want of proper legislation in regard to poor relief and it has been a matter of controversy as to the respective responsibility of the local authorities and the Government in regard to poor relief. The Local authorities want to shift the burden on the shoulders of the Government and *vice versa*. We are now almost unanimous that the subject should be the joint concern of both the Government and the local authorities."

The conference finally concluded that the responsibility should be joint, but that the initiation of legislation, without which beggary could not be tackled, lay with the Government.

It is neither wise nor possible to depend upon private donations to run these institutions. Government must finance the scheme and they must raise the necessary funds by special taxation. The Gwalior Markets Act of 1986 (Samvat) provides for the control and disbursal of *Dharmādāya*, a percentage of income set apart by merchants for charity. Such money is available all over India. It is well known that huge amounts are collected at most of the big and small temples and other places of worship all over India. Government should take courage in both hands and see that such money is spent for the amelioration of human suffering. The Calcutta Rotary Club suggested the increasing of trade licences by 12.5 per cent. The Indian Chamber of Commerce approved of this suggestion. Some others suggest that taxes on motors, cycles, marriages, telephones and public entertainments should all go to the tackling of the beggar problem.

Suffice it to say that the Vagrancy Act must accept the principle of levying fresh and specific taxes for the purpose of enforcing the Act. That done each Province may decide upon the nature of such taxation.

There is an interesting suggestion made in Art. 38 of the Belgian Law of 1891:

> "The cost of relief given in execution of the present law may be recovered from the persons relieved or from those liable for their maintenance. It may also be recovered from those who are responsible for the injury or illness which necessitates the relief."

That a reasonable amount of responsibility should be laid upon those who cause beggary to continue or who promote individual beggary to come into existence is a sound theory and may be put to test by the proposed Vagrancy Act in India.

(13) At present the maintenance of Poor Houses is a discretionary function of the Municipality. Government should take immediate steps to make it its obligatory function. We have already seen that on the Continent it is the joint concern of the Centre and the Provinces.

(14) There is a tendency in the various Vagrancy Bills

to provide for short sentences for the vagrant. Experience both in England and the Continent points towards the advisability of long sentences. The Departmental Committee on Vagrancy of 1904 endorse the objections to short sentences which have been advanced times without number by critics of the Vagrancy Laws, and advocate sentences of not less than six months or more than three years; but they maintain that there should be power to curtail a sentence under certain conditions. No useful purpose will be served by sending beggars to Workhouses for a very short period. Therefore the Act may well lay down, in certain cases, the minimum sentence to be given.

(15) Every Vagrancy Act has a provision for dealing with escape and re-arrest. The suggestion in most cases is to enhance the punishment. While we do not object to such a provision in the Act, we are afraid, too much concern is shown over the escape of inmates from Poor Houses. Escape of a beggar should not be viewed in the same light as that of a convict from jail. If after his escape, he is not found begging and has taken to some decent way of living, then the purpose of the Act and the Poor House is already fulfilled. Therefore, there is no need of enhancing his punishment. But if he is found begging again, then there is every justification for drastic steps. Rightly does the Departmental Committee on Vagrancy, 1904, observe: "If a colonist escapes, and is able to support himself without coming within the reach of the law, his escape from the colony is no matter for regret......if the detention is intended not so much as a punishment, but rather as a means of restraining the vagrant from his debased mode of life, the risk of his escaping need not be regarded so seriously as in the case of a criminal committed to prison to expiate his crime." Similarly, Monsieur Stroobant, Director of the unique Beggars Depot of Merxplas in Belgium, has this interesting observation to make:—

> "Those who escape are the energetic men who, influenced by some ruling idea—it may be of a family in distress or other motives less laudable— seek to reclass themselves. They are not always by any means the most corrupt, and often when I learn that a fugitive is following regular

work, I ask the Minister of Justice to suspend the order for his recapture. From the standpoint of the general security of the establishment the facility to escape constitutes a valuable safety valve, which it is expedient to recognise. In truth the latent energies, which imepl a man at all costs to seek emancipation from the bondage which he has to endure in the Beggars' Depot, are exhausted by flight".

A Vagrancy Act we do need. But there is danger in expecting too much from it. The object of such an Act must not and cannot be to make perfect men out of most imperfect material; it will be the far more modest one of correcting tendencies of character and conduct which are socially injurious, with a view to returning the objects of care to freedom, if they seriously wish to regain freedom, able, under favourable circumstances, to take their legitimate place among the citizens of the country. Only by setting before ourselves sane and moderate views shall we be able to advance towards our goal; to act otherwise will be to waste effort and court certain disappointment.

11

A PLEA FOR SOCIAL SECURITY TO PREVENT PAUPERISM*

While the Beveridge Plan and the American Social Security Programme are engaging the attention of the world as daring schemes undertaken by the State to provide social protection for its citizens against want, little or nothing is being done in India to protect the wage-earners against the hazards of unemployment, sickness, old age, and widowhood which frequently reduce them to abject poverty. Dr. Kumarappa therefore makes a plea for a modest policy of Social Security Programme to prevent the pauperization of individuals and families of low income level as a part of our post-war reconstruction plan.

IN India poverty and pauperism did not appear as social problems until the disruption of the joint family system and the removal of production from the home to the factory. The modern methods of production have resulted in the accumulation of wealth and its concentration in the hands of the few. Failure to give adequate attention to the social arrangements involved has given rise to the appalling evils of industrialism to which workers the world over have fallen victims.

* Since writing this (May 1943), a Committee, known as the Labour Investigation Committee, was appointed in February 1944, in pursuance of a resolution of the Tripartite Labour Conference held in September last year, to draw up a programme of Social Security for Labour in India. Its terms of reference are to investigate and report *inter alia* on the risks which bring about insecurity, the needs of labour to meet such risks, the methods most suitable for meeting such risks, and housing and factory conditions.

It has also disintegrated our village economy, so much so, that owing to unemployment and poverty thousands migrate from rural areas to cities in search of employment making the situation in cities even worse. Modern industrialism then is one of the major causes of poverty and suffering among the lower classes. Industrial accidents, unemployment, disease and old age force many of them to take to begging as a means of livelihood.

In the preceding chapters various aspects of this problem of beggary have been dealt with. We have also noticed that special classes, such as the aged, widows, the crippled, the blind, the feeble-minded, etc., need special care and treatment and that organised relief—indoor and outdoor—must take the place of indiscriminate charity. "All remedies of poverty fall into two classes—the palliative and the curative—the endeavour to relieve poverty or the attempt to prevent poverty."[1] Modern scientific method is to attack it both ways. While modern charity is based on the principle of prevention, it does not ignore the immediate problem of providing relief for the poor and the needy in our midst. Since social security is a step towards the mitigation of poverty, we make a plea for its introduction in our country for the protection of the poor, believing that the time is ripe for its favourable consideration.

We are painfully conscious of the rapid changes taking place throughout the world. And we too have been drawn into the maelstrom. What the aspect of the world would be after the war is beyond the pale of social prognostics. Yet one may hazard the general statement that the old order is being swept away, structure and spirit. In the melee of social adjustments that must inevitably follow the present chaos, the new social order must be formed and the nature of that new order will be based on our experiences of, and reactions to, the present one. It may be frankly admitted that no one will regret if the old structure, at the altar of which priests in the name of capitalism sacrifice human blood and sweat, passes away. But it goes

1 Seligman, *Principles of Economics*, 1907, p. 687.

without saying that the present system of social living is one which makes parasitic exploitation thrive, renders sympathy between man and man almost impossible, creates and kindles hatred between members of different strata of society and denies good living to the masses of mankind. Indeed, ignorance, poverty, humiliation, disease and death have been the lot of the majority of men all over the world.

Why Social Security. This war has shown, as no other war in history, that victory can be the result only of the concentrated efforts, physical and intellectual of all classes of men in a community. That is to say, war calls for sacrifices from all elements of society— from nobles, from workers, even from women, whatever their share of happiness or misery in times of peace. It is the one great lesson of the total war that all the elements and individuals of the State are bound each to each for weal or woe. The contributions of labour to the common weal are now becoming emphatically manifest and call for a new deal and status for labour. It is good that statesmen of all nations have realised betimes that the post-war social planning should ensure better social justice to all ranks in the State, better than what they uptil now have enjoyed. It is to the securing of this objective to the people of England that the now famous Beveridge Plan sets itself; and the National Resources Planning Board and the Social Security Board's 7th Annual Report now before the Congress seek to answer a like necessity in the U. S. A. But England and America and many countries of Europe have already had some form of social security plans which have been worked with more or less efficiency. The problem before those countries is now to extend the benefits of social security already existing so that all individuals in the State, men, women and children, disabled and unemployed and all others requiring State help can be brought within the purview of the plan.

But India has to begin from the beginning. She has no experience of the social security programme, such as the West has. But all the evil and hazards that are to be found in the social life of the Western nations exist in our country also. Old age dependence, maternity risks, unemployment hazards, sickness

liabilities and such other wants and crises which lead to the disintegration of the home and human personalities, reduce a nation's strength and affect its welfare are universal problems; and each country has them in a more or less intense degree. Hence, it is no wonder if we too are obliged to face the problem of social security in any post-war reconstruction effort. Indeed, the planning of a new social order for India should be based on the dual principles of elimination of poverty among the masses, and insurance against all manner of risks for all those citizens that can be possibly brought under the scheme. Looked into closely the latter principle is only a method of tackling the national problem of poverty while the former is the objective to be achieved.

A plea for Social Security for India is not based on the psychology of imitation, on the habit of doing what the other countries in the West are doing. Though it is but natural to be stirred into similar ways of thinking and doing while all other countries are planning for the elimination of poverty among them, our plea is based on the full recognition of the pressing needs of our crores of men, women and children, who live from day to day in the paralysing fear of insecurity. Among the countries of the world India is known to be a rich country inhabited by poor men. Though this looks like a derision and paradox it is nevertheless a poignant fact. The poverty of India is so self-evident that even a hurricane foreign tourist through any part of India can easily observe. Statistically computed the income *per capita* in India, according to Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, was Rs. 65.4 during the year 1931-32. In other words, the average monthly earnings of an Indian amounted to a little more than Rs. 5/- in 1931. Considering the abject penury of the majority of Indians who hardly have a single square meal a day, it is very doubtful if they can ever be credited with having the princely income of Rs. 5/- per mensem. Staring facts belie such statistical speculations. Moreover, in a country like India where there are tremendous differences in scales of income—and a very few have what may be called steady income—any average of income is bound to be false and decep-

tive. Though the poverty of India is an appalling fact, it is not due to any single factor, economic, political, social or any other. As a matter of fact, it is the cumulative effect of many contributory causes. Nevertheless, unemployment may be reckoned as one of the main factors causing wide-spread poverty in India.

Extent of Unemployment.—In the absence of statistical information it is difficult to estimate the number of unemployed in India. Moreover, the artificial conditions created by the war have provided temporary employment to thousands of our men hitherto unemployed, thus submerging the problem of unemployment for the time being. But the fear is widely and justifiably entertained that as soon as the war ceases India will return to its former position of poverty and unemployment unless, indeed, she introduces in the not distant future a social security programme which shall include an effective unemployment relief scheme.

From the Tables given on page 140 we get an idea of the total number of earners and dependants and the general distribution of occupations in India.

TABLE I

Earners and Dependants in 1931

	Persons	*Males*	*Females*
Total Population ...	350,529,557	180,620,612	169,908,945
Total Earners	125,270,827	94,415,536	27,855,291
Total Working Dependants	28,615,063	7,644,575	20,070,488
Total Non-Working Dependants.	196,643,667	75,560,501	121,083,166

It may be seen from Table I that non-working dependants are considerably more than the earners. Even if we exclude the total working dependants, who are a little more than one fourth the number of total earners, non-working dependants consti-

tute much more than one half of the entire population of India – a very great strain indeed on the earners considering their slender income capacities. A glance at Table II will show that persons

TABLE II

General Distribution of Occupations in 1931

Exploitation of animals and vegetation	Exploitation of minerals	Industry (including Textiles, Hides & skins, wood, building etc.)	Transport including post and telegraph	Trade	Public Administration & Liberal Arts
110,760,324	404,262	17,523,982	9,778,520	9,336,969	4,819,452

occupied in services promising steady employment constitute a minute fraction of earners. Except a few public administration services, like the army, the navy, the police and the State services and a few of the transport services, the rest of the occupations provide no security of permanent employment. In occupations involving the exploitation of animals and vegetation and minerals, in industry, in transport services and in trade, one is frequently faced with the problem of seasonal employment and sometimes with partial employment. Seasonal and partial employment are part of the unemployment problem; and though they are not as disastrous in their consequences as total long-term unemployment, yet they are potent enough to degenerate the individual and the family.

The Tragedy of Unemployment.- Unemployment is one of the misfortunes most feared by wage-earners. "Non-employment or loss of employment in nearly every wage-earner's career," declares L. W. Squire, "stands as spectre of forbidden mien, with a guant finger pointing the way to charity and old age dependency." The truth of this statement is seen in the fact that unemployment and irregular employment undermines the morale of the jobless. The discouragement, the feeling of help-

lessness and uncertainty are most demoralizing. Enforced but intermittent idleness produces restlessness. Frequent and prolonged unemployment destroys ambition and the sense of family responsibility, and brings about utter demoralization.

The effect of unemployment on the worker and his family is disastrous. As Mr. A. Epstein points out, it frequently decides whether the worker shall drift from his skilled to any unskilled job; whether his wife shall add to her duties that of supplementing her husband's wages, or whether the children shall be undernourished or enter prematurely some blind alley occupation. Lack of work affects the industrious and thrifty workers as well as the indolent and irresponsible ones. It not only sweeps away the savings—accumulation of many years—but destroys the habit of thrift. It is no wonder therefore if the worker, uncertain of the morrow, is encouraged to lead a hand-to-mouth existence. A crisis in this level of existence is likely to make him fall back on public charity for his support and that of his family. In other words, unemployment lessens income, reduces working efficiency, demoralizes the worker and his family, produces industrial and political unrest, and a variety of social vices. Unemployment is, indeed, " a culture bed for pauperism and its accompanying evils."

Why Don't They Save?—If unemployment brings so much misery and suffering to the wage-earners and their families, why, some ask, don't they save? The popular opinion is that any able-bodied man who wants to work can find work and that any one who is unemployed must be physically, mentally or morally inferior. Further, it is assumed that any person who is reasonably industrious and thrifty could lay aside enough money to provide against temporary bad times as sickness and old age. But is the prevailing wage rate high enough to meet his and his family's need for food, clothing and shelter, and then put by enough to cover days or periods of enforced idleness, as well as sickness and old age? The Table given below indicates the usual pre-war wage rates in cities, towns and mofussils :—

TABLE III

Daily Wages of Workers

Workers	Cities	Towns	Mofussil
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Skilled	1-4-0 to 2-8-0	1-0-0 to 2-4-0	0-14-0 to 2-0-0
Semi-skilled... ...	0-12-0	0-10-0	0-6-0
Unskilled	0-12-0	0-8-0	0-5-0
Unskilled Women Workers	0-8-0	0-6-0	0-4-0

The above wages are hardly enough to meet the needs of a working class family made up of the worker, his wife and two children. Because such wages are inadequate, it becomes necessary to make the wife and children work to supplement the family income. The industry which underpays its workers has no right to exist as it makes the wife and children labour to make both ends meet. It is indeed a cruel form of exploitation. But this is not the whole story. Industrial strife, which is so common an aspect of our modern industry, makes a further reduction in the family's monthly earnings. The following Table sets out the number of disputes each year since 1930, the number of persons affected by them and the number of working days lost.

TABLE IV

Industrial Disputes in India, 1930-39

Year	Disputes	Workers affected	Working days lost
1930	140	196,301	2,261,731
1931	166	203,008	2,408,123
1932	118	128,099	1,922,437
1933	146	164,938	2,168,961
1934	159	220,808	4,775,559
1935	145	114,217	973,475
1936	157	169,029	2,358,062
1937	379	647,801	8,982,257
1938	399	401,075	9,198,708
1939	406	409,189	4,992,795
TOTAL	2,223	2,654,465	40,042,108

These figures are significant: Within a period of ten years there occurred a total of 2,223 strikes and lock-outs involving a total of 2,654,465 employees. The time loss amounted to 40,042,108 days. This means considerable financial loss to the workers affected. Industrial disputes, while generally helpful to elevate the worker's standard, frequently sap the little savings, if any, and drive him to the money lender or on the road to beg. Is it any wonder then if our workers, instead of having a bank account are heavily indebted? "The majority of industrial workers," reports the Royal Commission on Labour, "are in debt for the greater part of their working lives. Many, indeed, are born in debt and it evokes both admiration and regret to find how commonly a son assumes responsibility for his father's debt—an obligation which rests on religious and social but seldom on legal sanction. It is estimated that, in most industrial centres, the porportion of families or individuals who are in debt is not less than two-thirds of the whole. We believe that, in the majority of cases, the amount of debt exceeds three months' wages and is often in excess of this amount."[1] Similarly, in rural areas the problem of indebtedness is very serious and so also the problems of unemployment and poverty are very great. Under such circumstances is it possible for the poor wage-

1 Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, 1931, p. 243.

earner to save to protect himself and his family against any form of misfortune or crisis?

Unemployment Insurance.—In view of the disastrous effects of unemployment, the inability of the worker to save and the amount of unemployment which normally exists in our country, it is necessary to devise ways and means of protecting the unemployed. For purposes of treatment we may classify the unemployed under different heads: (*a*) those who are temporarily unemployable; (*b*) those who are temporarily unemployed but inefficient; (*c*) those who are employable but more or less permanently unemployed; (*d*) those who are unemployable and permanently unemployed and (*e*) those who are permanently unemployed and unwilling to work.

The causes which bring about these various classes of unemployed are many and diverse. Some of them are found in the very nature of our industrial organization itself such as fluctuation in the demand for labour and the labour policies of industries. Some others are found in the individual himself such as mental and physical defect, lack of training, etc. Still others arise from social changes and natural disturbances. The methods we adopt for the solution of this problem must attack the root causes. To begin with, it is necessary to stabilise industry and dovetail seasonal industries. Then we need well organized employment exchanges and they must work in co-operation with the best social service agencies. We must havevo cational training centres to train youth. Further, there should be correctional institutions to retrain the unemployable who are "workshy."

But this is not all. For those who are involuntarily unemployed, we must provide unemployment insurance to prevent personal and family disorganization. The principle underlying unemployment insurance is not new. It is the same principle on which our joint family system is based, namely, that in times of crisis the burden of an individual member should not be borne by himself alone but should be shared by the other members of the family. Unemployment insurance really means that the burden now borne by workers who are involuntarily idle will be spread over a large part of society. Since enforced idleness is due

not to personal causes but social, its burden should be borne, not wholly by the man himself but by the employer and the State.

Some of the industrial hazards may best be guarded against by means of unemployment insurance and sickness insurance schemes. In our country unemployment insurance, whether voluntary or compulsory, does not exist at all, while voluntary sickness insurance exists among a very few mills to provide benefits only to a handful of workers who contribute their share to the insurance fund. The industrially unemployed have no option but to knock about till they find a job or, if they do not find one, to beg, borrow or steal. There are not even private charity organizations to provide the unemployed with means of livelihood. In America prior to 1929 the burden of providing relief to the unemployed "was borne by private organizations operating locally, and, in larger measure, by local public agencies."[1] State agencies supervised the dispensing of relief. But within a decade social insurance measures have progressed so much in America that during the six months ending June 30, 1938, 2,500,000 workers out of a number of 27,500,000 who were covered by insurance, received benefits.[2] The credit of compulsory unemployment insurance goes to Switzerland which introduced it as early as 1904. But the experience of Great Britain in compulsory unemployment insurance is much greater; though the system was introduced only in 1911, it has passed through several amendments during the succeeding years, culminating in the suggestions contained in the comprehensive Beveridge Plan. Italy, Austria and other European countries before the war had their schemes of compulsory unemployment insurance. One point worthy of note is that, though in most countries unemployment insurance experience dates back to only three decades, the scheme has been found to be extremely useful in preventing poverty and dependence. Hence, it has had phenomenal extension in recent years.

Unemployment insurance generally provides benefits to persons who have lost their livelihood. Under the Beveridge

1 Millspaugh, A. C., *Public Welfare Organisation*, p. 308.
2 See Stewart, M. S., *Security or the Dole*, p. 11.

Plan an unemployed person gets removal and lodging grants. Unemployment benefit will continue as long as unemployment lasts, but is usually subject to a condition of attendance at a work or training centre after a certain period. This means the scheme contemplates not merely financial benefit but technical rehabilitation of the individual. The receipt of unemployment benefits is subject to the condition that the worker will have actually paid 26 contributions towards his insurance.

Though compulsory unemployment insurance has worked well in other countries, there are great difficulties in the way of its introduction in India. One tremendous difficulty is the low income level of the Indian worker which we have already considered and which makes it impossible for him to put by for an emergency. Further, with money barely sufficient to feed himself and his family, the Indian worker cannot be expected to contribute anything towards his unemployment insurance. Perhaps the scheme of unemployment insurance may be tried among the skilled workers in cities. But skilled workers are only a few while semi-skilled and unskilled workers are legion. Also the skilled worker has more or less steady employment while the semi-skilled and the unskilled workers are the constant victims of unemployment hazards. It is wage-earners of this class who are most in need of insurance protection and yet wholly incapable of joining contributory insurance. Since society is responsible for the present day economic organization which brings about involuntary unemployment, it is its duty to assume the burden of social protection of the poorest and most insecure of the population, and grant unemployment assurance not as charity but as a matter of right.

Sickness Insurance.—Sickness insurance in India, in so far as it affects the health and means of living of the industrial worker, suffers from the same defects as unemployment insurance. But the incidence of sickness must be guarded against not only among the workers but among the nation as a whole. Sickness is a national problem, and underlying it is the question of nutrition and health of the entire community. It is frequently disease that disintegrates and dismembers the Indian

family. While illness of the earning member paralyses the sources of income, illness of the members of the family drains and impoverishes the resources of the family. Sickness, therefore, may be characterized as one of the major causes of India's pauperization. Influenza, tuberculosis, small-pox, malaria, respiratory diseases and a dozen other nameless ones take their heavy toll of victims annually. The incidence of death by disease in British India in 1936 and 1937 are given below:

TABLE V

Deaths from Diseases in British India.

Disease	Deaths 1936	Deaths 1937
Cholera	159,720	99,054
Small-pox	104,805	54,810
Plague	13,021	28,169
Dysentery & Diarrhoea	281,666	267,479
Respiratory Diseases	493,441	487,319
Fevers	3,593,497	3,569,590
Other causes	1,729,581	1,695,954
Total ...	6,375,731	6,202,375

The above Table shows that the largest number of deaths are due to "fevers" but unfortunately the separate figures relating to the individual diseases contained in the group are seldom given as the present system of registration makes this impossibe. Nevertheless, among fevers malaria continues to be the gravest menace to the wage-earners. Colonel Sinton, of the Indian Medical Service, pointed out not long ago that at least one hundred million individuals suffer yearly from malaria in British India alone, and of these only about a tenth receive treatment in hospitals. Major Bently, also of the Indian Medical Service, made a special study of malaria in Bengal. According to his estimate, some eighty thousand villages in the

province were stricken with malaria. He reckoned that some 30 million people suffer from the disease in Bengal alone. It has been calculated that deaths from malaria during 1936 amounted to 1,567,084 or about 44 per cent of total recorded 'fever' deaths. Malaria is more common in rural areas than in towns, though it is bad enough in the latter.

Public health statistics in India seldom indicate the social importance of many of the widespread diseases among the poor. For example, typhoid fever is perhaps of even greater importance in relation to poverty in the sickness it causes than in the deaths resulting from it. For every death from typhoid fever, there are about eight cases of illness averaging 75 days of inability to work. Moreover, the conditions producing typhoid result also in other forms of sickness. Similarly, malaria by its frequent attacks, very materially affects the worker's earning capacity, lowers his vitality and predisposes him to other causes of death. In fact, it causes more sickness and loss of working power than any other disease in India. Further, from sickness statistics referring to India it is not known how many earning members of families are affected, what are the number of working hours lost (of industrial workers during sickness), what is the amount actually expended on medical care, and what is the total of wages lost due to absence from work during illness.

During 1930-31 the Bombay Labour Office conducted an enquiry into sickness incidence among the cotton mill workers in Bombay City. Their results embodied in Table VI given below makes revealing reading. It shows, in a limited field of enquiry, that about 22% received no medical treatment at all, while about 40% of the sick resorted to country medicines. What type of country medicines was used is not known. But there is no doubt that the workers resorted to treatments of doubtful efficacy driven by the forbidding costs of proper medical care. Of course, there is the element of superstition and ignorance which influence the Indians' preference of quack medicines and country remedies. Most often sick workers and their families content themselves with wearing charms supposed to be potent enough to drive away any disease or deformity be-

longing to the body and the brain. But making allowance for superstitious ideas, it must be said that poverty is at the root

TABLE VI

Medical Treatment Received by Workers during Sickness[1]

Kind of Treatment	Males		Females		Total no. of cases	Percentage to total
	No. of cases	Percentage	No. of cases	Percentage		
No Treatment	870	18.80	347	34.77	1,217	21.63
Country Medicines ...	1,848	39.92	401	40.18	2,249	39.97
Western Medicines ...	1,536	33.18	195	19.54	1,731	30.76
Country and Western Medicines	44	0.95	3	0.30	47	0.84
Patent Medicines	294	6.35	46	4.61	340	6.04
Patent and Western Medicines	7	0.15	...	...	7	0.12
Patent and Country Medicines	4	0.09	...	...	4	0.07
Patent, Country and Western Medicines	1	0.02	...	...	1	0.02
Other remedies including imperfectly specified ...	25	0.54	6	0.60	31	0.55
Total ...	4,629	100.00	998	100.00	5,627	100.00

of the worker's medical preferences. It is not true to say, as is generally done, that Indians' denial of scientific medical care of themselves is based on natural antipathy towards Western methods of treatment. We can affirm from our experience that Indians are not slow to take advantage of modern medicine when it is made accessible to them. The question is not Indian or foreign medicine. Whichever is found to be effective must be recommended and administered to the sick. But the Indian worker has so far found the costs of medical care much beyond his means. Indeed, proper medical care is looked upon by the average Indian as a luxury! Perhaps, the only proper medi-

1 Quoted by Keni, V. P., *The Problem of Sickness Insurance*, p. 85.

cine which the poor Indian takes—and that unconsciously—is chlorine, when water is chlorinated at its source!

In recommending the provision of adequate medical facilities, the development of welfare schemes, and the construction of working class houses, the Royal Commission on Labour persuadingly remarked: "There are few directions offering such great opportunity for profitable investment on the part of the State. The economic loss involved in the birth and rearing of great numbers of children who do not live to make any return to the community, in the sickness and disease which debilitate a large proportion of the workers and in early death, with the consequent reduction of the earning years is incalculable. Even a small step in the prevention of these ills would have an appreciable effect in increasing the wealth of India; a courageous attack on them might produce a revolution in the standards of life and prosperity."[1]

It has been calculated that the average daily cost of medicine per indoor patient in the Maratha Tuberculosis Hospital Bombay, during the nine years from 1931-39 was Rs. 0-1-7. This is the lowest possible estimate. Based on this calculation, it is suggested that the worker should contribute his share compulsorily towards a sickness insurance fund, the employer should contribute double the amount the worker contributes and the State should pay towards the fund at least one fifth the sum of the worker's contribution. In other words, a tripartite contributory sickness insurance fund should be instituted and made compulsory in all industries. This is a very feasible suggestion. Though it is difficult to induce the worker to put by as. 5/- per month for his sickness insurance, it is not impossible. But will the employer come forward with his share of as. 10/- per month per worker? And is the Government ready to pay towards the fund one anna per mensem per head?[2]

The whole problem of sickness incidence should be viewed as a national problem. Indeed, the health and vitality of the entire population should be the first concern of the State. Dur-

1 Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, 1931, p. 243.

2 See Keni, V. P., *The Problem of Sickness Insurance*, p. 48.

ing their illness, individuals, whether they are workers or non-workers, are burdens to themselves and to others. In view of the importance of health to national welfare, Health Insurance Societies in England and America have undertaken to give medical aid to whomsoever contributes on an insurance basis. Also groups of individuals in various localities unite for obtaining medical benefits for themselves and their families. For a specified annual fee the members of the group are entitled to get hospital care for a specified number of days. This system of obtaining medical benefit is well known as Group Hospitalization. In America groups of people belonging to a region, sometimes whole villages, obtain medical service in this manner. There is now compulsory health insurance in the various countries of the world, including Japan. Generally, insurance is compulsory only for wage-earners and for employed persons receiving less than a specified income.[1]

In no other country in the world does health insurance apply to the entire population as in Soviet Russia. Soviet health insurance, says M. Stewart, is about as all-inclusive as it is possible to be. "All workers are included without exception." There is no restriction because of income, and the right to obtain benefit commences after two months' employment. The law provides full wages for a worker during a leave of absence because of illness, when quarantined by a contagious sickness of some one in his family, or while nursing a sick member of the family. There is no waiting period; benefits begin on the day of sickness. "Full wages" does not, however, include piece-work earnings, and is subject to a maximum of 180 roubles a month. In addition to obtaining his wages, the patient is entitled to full medical care, including the service of specialists and surgeons. Free care in hospitals and sanatoria is provided when needed, as are drugs, medicines and appliances. This service is granted not only to the insured person, as in Great Britain, but to the entire family. Permanent and partial disability are provided for by a rather complex system

1 Reed, L. S., *Health Insurance*, p. 210.

of pensions, which vary in accordance with need and the degree of the disability.[1]

Steps taken in the field of protection against sickness have been found to produce notable results. Summarizing the German experience of health insurance, Dr. Frieda Wunderlich adds : " Health insurance has protected the health of the German people in a period in which starvation and misery threatened it with deterioration. It has survived all strains of the War and its aftermath and has been little affected by the depression. Specifically, it has lowered the death rate, sheltered pregnant mothers and infants, removed one of the largest causes for seeking poor relief, and raised relief standards. Through its mass records of illness it has contributed toward extending the scope of medical research and toward effective preventive measures, enabled the hospitals to modernize and increase their equipment, removed one of the principal handicaps in the professional paths of the young doctor, and has tended to make more uniform the geographical distribution of medical facilities."[2]

While other countries have made so much progress, we are still far behind in this respect. The question of sickness insurance was brought to the notice of the Government of India in 1928 by the recommendations of the International Labour Conference. In its reply to the Conference the Government stated that it was not feasible just then to introduce sickness insurance owing to the migratory character of labour, the worker's habit of returning to his village at times of illness, the lack of sufficient number of medical practitioners and the opposition of workers to compulsory deductions from their pay. Since the incidence of sickness among the working classes is very high, and the worker during periods of illness finds himself destitute of resources, the Royal Commission suggested that all methods that may lead to the alleviation of the existing hardships should be explored. The tentative scheme formulated by the Commission separated the responsibility for the medical and financial benefits. The

1 Steward, M., *Social Security*, (1937), p. 27.

2 Wunderlich, Frieda, " What Health Insurance did for Germany." *Social Security*, 1936. (New York, American Association for Social Security, Inc.) 1936, pp. 139, 140.

former, maintained the Commission, could be undertaken by Government on a non-contributory basis, the latter through the employers on the basis of contributions by themselves and by the workers.[1]

And this was some twelve years ago. Although illness is the most common hazard to which every working class family is exposed, it is not yet covered by social insurance. The medical facilities are hopelessly inadequate, and the wages paid make it impossible for most workers to get through periods of crisis without borrowing, or making their wives and children work. The need for sickness insurance in our country is apparent. The difficulties of putting through such a scheme are no doubt formidable, but they do not absolve the Government of its responsibility of providing the worker relief during periods of protracted illness.

Workmen's Compensation.—Let us now turn our attention to the tragic toll of the injuries and deaths resulting from accidents. The two major sources of accidents are our machine industry and the high speed transportation. Unfortunately, complete and accurate statistical information is woefully lacking; not that we do not have statistical bureaux but they are more concerned with material things than with human events. Hence, we know less about such an important matter as the number of accidental injuries suffered by our population and more about the quantity of cotton imported or peanuts exported!

We shall deal here only with industrial accidents. Even in this field our statistical information is fragmentary as only accidents which occur in industries which come under the Factories Act are recorded for purposes of compensation. In recognition of the hazards of industrial work the first step towards social security in India was taken with the introduction of the Workmen's Compensation Act in 1923. Its scope which was very limited has now been increasingly enlarged by numerous amendments to the Act from 1926 to 1939. The Act now provides coverage for occupational diseases also—though such cases for

1 Report of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, p. 268.

compensation have been few—with this requisition that the employee should have served more than 6 months to claim the benefits falling under occupational diseases. The Workmen's Compensation Act includes only those with monthly income below Rs. 300/- and it is administered on provincial lines. The rate of compensation varies according to the nature and extent of the accident, the wage, and the majority or minority of the worker.

The Act was passed in July 1924. From that date to December 1940 there were over 360,000 accidents for which compensations were paid. Of these there were about 11,000 deaths, the rest being non-fatal cases. Industrial accidents always present an economic problem as they involve either a total loss of income or a loss of earning capacity. Industrial accidents differ from other groups of accidents in that they choose a class as their victim—the class of wage-earners who are least able to bear the burden. To the worker accident means death, mutilation, disfigurement, dismemberment, pain and suffering, expense of recovery and loss of earning capacity.

Industrial injury is in a special way the result of modern civilization. It is closely connected with the factory and the machine. Many, if not all, of the hazards are a distinct consequence of this industrial system. But what does an industrial injury mean in terms of human values? It may mean death at one extreme. It may mean nothing more than a slight wound at the other. But in between these two extremes it may mean a great many things. Let us briefly consider these various possibilities. 11,000 deaths—mostly of men in their vigour of life—from industrial accidents! It means that many groups of families lost their bread-winner and several times that number of dependants were left without support. And then, 349,000 non-fatal accidents and these include temporary and permanent disablement. Temporary disability involves a period of enforced idleness; there is the cost of recovery and the loss of wages. Further, the injury, the pain, the anxiety and the economic loss are considerable. This is so in the case of temporary disability. One can imagine how much more will be the loss and anxiety

if the inability to resume one's normal occupation with the same efficiency as before is not temporary but permanent. In this group are thousands who remain alive but with injuries so serious that they are totally disabled for life. It includes thousands who lose an eye or both eyes, one leg or two legs, an arm or a hand, or one or more fingers.

The wage-earners are workers with their hands and arms and feet and eyes. Deprived of these they become helpless and dependent and in many cases they suffer a considerable reduction in their earning capacity, since their economic efficiency depends on their physical fitness. Not a few of those rendered blind, one-armed, one-legged, total cripples are forced to join the rank of beggars. Fatal accidents to wage-earners mean broken families, dependent widows, neglected children and orphans, reduced standard of living, malnutrition and deteriorated health. In mechanised industry fatal accidents, they say, will happen. If this is the price we have to pay for our economic progress, is it not enough if we exact that price in human life? Must we also exact the additional price of want and destitution from their wives, children and other dependants? Of course not, we say; industry must bear the financial loss which is really no burden to it as the loss is shifted on to the consumers by adding it to the cost of production.

Most of us then approve of compensation as a just and efficient method of handling the economic consequences of industrial accidents. But what is the basis of compensation and what is it in reality? Compensation may be (1) equal and uniform; (2) adjusted to need; or (3) adjusted to loss, *i.e.*, previous wages. The principle of equal and uniform benefits is rarely applied to accident compensation. And seldom are benefits adjusted to needs. The prevailing principle is the adjustment of benefits to wages, that is, an adjustment primarily to losses. The law in the literal sense of the word is a law of compensation and should mean full and not partial compensation. It should mean "complete compensation for losses sustained; for the cost of medical treatment and care, for the loss of wage for the duration of disability". But is it so in reality? The provision relat-

ing to the amounts of compensation of the Workmen's Compensation Act as amended are given in the Table below:

TABLE VII

Rates of Compensation for Different Wage Classes[1]

Monthly wages of the workman injured		Amount of compensation for		Half monthly payment as compensation for temporary disablement of adult	
		Death of adult	Permanent total disablement of adult		
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	
More than	But not more than	Rs.	Rs.	Half his monthly wages	
Rs.	Rs.			Rs.	As.
0	10	500	700		
10	15	550	770	5	0
15	18	600	840	6	0
18	21	630	882	7	0
21	24	720	1,008	8	0
24	27	810	1,134	8	8
27	30	900	1,260	9	0
30	35	1,050	1,470	9	8
35	40	1,200	1,680	10	0
40	45	1,350	1,890	11	4
45	50	1,500	2,100	12	8
50	60	1,800	2,520	15	0
60	70	2,100	2,940	17	8
70	80	2,400	3,360	20	0
80	100	3,000	4,200	25	0
100	200	3,500	4,900	30	0
200	......	4,000	5,600	30	0

Whether our compensation system is good or imperfect can only be judged by the treatment it provides for serious accidents involving grave economic consequences—cases of permanent

1 Schedule IV to the Act.

total disablement. What a gruesome story of suffering, despair and economic distress each one of such cases represents! The totally blinded, the armless, the legless, the worker with a broken back! Hopelessly handicapped through accident! If the worker before his permanent disablement received a monthly wage of Rs. 10/-, he will be entitled to a compensation of Rs. 700/- which represents his 70 months' or little less than six years' wages. What is he to do after this period? Is it right on the part of industry to make him shift for himself, to become a dependant or a street beggar for the rest of his life? Are not those who belong to the group of totally and permanently disabled entitled to life benefits? The significant features of partial disability is that it does not altogether destroy but only reduces the earning capacity. As the loss expresses itself in reduction of wages, compensation must be based upon the amount of that reduction for the duration of that disability, that is, till death. So long as the entire loss is not covered but only a specific portion of it, it cannot be considered satisfactory. It will only create a large body of cripples and semi-cripples dependent on public charity for the rest of their lives and also reduce thousands of families to a very low standard of living.

And now the fatal accidents. The amount of compensation payable in the case of the injured workman when monthly wage is not more than Rs. 10/- is Rs. 500/- for death. If he is a single man without dependants then the economic loss is not serious. At the other extreme is the married man with a wife, several small children and other dependants to support. Our Compensation Act provides only for a uniform treatment without differentiating the needs of the two cases which is obviously unjust. Compensation should be adjusted according to the need of the dependants. Our Act provides only a lump sum death benefit equal to about four years' wages. The amount if paid out all at once looms large in the eyes of the disconsolate widow. But how much security does it offer for the duration of her widowhood and the children's minority?

Judged by these standards, we must admit that our compensation system is inadequate and imperfect. Nevertheless, it

indicates that we have accepted the principle of compensation which is economically sound and ethically just. But we have yet to achieve the standards of a good compensation law. Millions are still uncovered by the Act. Its scope, therefore, has to be extended and payment should be ajdusted to needs. To the employer the additional cost of compensation insurance is not a serious expense; to the consumer it only means a small increase in the price of goods but to the wage earner compensation means much more. It is protection against misery, suffering and want. Security against hazards of work conditions is the inalienable right of the wage-earner, and it is the duty of society to provide him and his family protection against poverty and pauperism resulting from industrial accidents.

The Aged Poor.—While medical science is striving to prolong man's life, the machine industry is reducing his period of usefulness. Though the phrase "old at forty" may be an exaggerated statement of the problem, it has been found from experiencein running an employment bureau that a man over forty is at a disadvantage in securing employment in industry and that opportunities of finding a job are few for a man of fifty. Even while men are in employment it is not an uncommon practice in some establishments to weed them out as soon as they show signs of slowing down. When then, one may ask, is a man old? In answer to this question we must say that the real test is the test of fitness to carry on his job. It is not merely a question of being young or old, but of being too young or too old for this, that or the other type of work. Pragmatic standards of efficiency are the criteria applied to test a person's fitness. Ordinarily, physical energy begins to decline much before physical health, and mental powers begin to deteriorate at a more advanced age. Naturally therefore in primitive civilization, when physical effort was essential, brawn was of more importance in the economic usefulness of a man than his brain. But in an agricultural civilization like ours, custodians of long experience and sound judgment play an important part in transmitting the accumulated knowledge from one age to another. Hence, the mental rather than the physical attitudes of old age determine its social

status. Reverence for age has thus become the foundation of all social relationships in our rural civilization and has given old men and women not only an important role but also protection in the joint family system.

But unfortunately science is proving detrimental to the security of old age in our country in more ways than one. It is responsible for speeding up the methods of production. The introduction of modern industry with its private wage contract is disintegrating our rural economy. While the family unit is the centre of agriculture, the individual is the centre of a wage contract. Industrial employment presupposes a definite amount of working capacity and ability to keep up with the speed of the machine. A wage contract, therefore, has to be entered into under competitive conditions where the aged are placed at a disadvantage in competing with younger and stronger men. Then again. practically all modern tendencies, even those which are supposed to be initiated in his own welfare, work against the older employee. The increasing standard of efficiency, the elimination of skill and experience, workmen's compensation laws etc., all tend to discourage the hiring of older workers. The basic requirements of speed and alertness of modern industry necessitate the casting aside of older workers as so much industrial scrap-heap. Can we blame the old worker if he bemoans the fact that the prolongation of life without proportionately increasing the period of usefulness only results in increasing the years of drudgery and destitution? Is it any wonder then if old age under these inevitable conditions of modern industry becomes a serious economic and social problem?

Further, science is now laying the basis for an urban civilization in India. In doing so it is disintegrating the joint family system which serves even now in rural areas the purpose of an old age pension. The joint family has through the ages cared for the aged and such responsibility is the most natural solution of the problem. But modern industrial conditions not only disintegrate this system but make it impossible for children and relatives to afford the expenses involved in caring for their aged parents owing to low wages and higher costs of living in industrial

cities. Even at that, many reduce their requirements and those of their children to the barest minimum possible in order to care for their old parents. Though such filial affection and the sense of duty are admirable, one wonders if it is just that the little children have their rights sacrificed in the interests of their aged grandparents. The case of the old person who has no relatives upon whom to depend is even more pitiable.

Out of a population of about 400,000,000 there are approximately 30,000,000 persons of 60 years and over in India. In other words, it means that for every 1,000 of the population there are about 14 persons who are 60 years old or more, some of whom are protected by pensions, personal savings, income from property or by relations. It is only those who are not covered thus that are in need of State protection, as the possibilities of self-support for them are infinitely less now than in a pre-machine era. Thousands of the aged who are reduced to destitution and beggary are persons who had borne their share of the world's work for thirty or forty years and made their humble contribution to the creation of wealth. Is it fair to let these veterans of toil to seek, at the eve of their life, charity for food and the pavements to rest their weary head?

Old Age Assistance.—How then is this problem to be solved? We are aware that, while in some instances personal depravity is responsible for misery and dependency, the major causes of old age dependency lie in our institutions, in our changing social and economic order. Low wages, unemployment, strikes and lockouts, business failures and industrial superannuation are more potent causes than idleness or thriftlessness which are not infrequently the effects of the former maladjustments. In view of the seriousness of the problem and the untold misery it causes, many of the countries have adopted measures for its solution or mitigation, and we can well learn from their valuable experience.

Of the great powers of the world, it was Germany which gave the lead in providing protection to the aged. It was in 1889 that the German plan of compulsory insurance was enacted and naturally, therefore, it is the oldest plan in operation. Under this system insurance is compulsory for manual workers and others



The social worker and his problem



Ever Present

earning upto 7,200 marks (about Rs. 5,500) a year. And now forty-two nations provide security of some kind or other for the aged. It is interesting to note that old-age insurance has definitely passed through the stage of voluntary protection and is now compulsory in practically all civilized countries. Within the last ten years old-age security from being the concern of labour and social welfare organisations has become one of the major issues in the United States of America. Old age assistance legislation, starting with Arizona as far back as 1914, has gone on spreading rapidly. In 1936, the Federal Government extended co-operation to States in financing old-age assistance. By September 1938 all the American States qualified themselves for Federal Aid by adopting old-age assistance scheme.[1]

Thus practically all the progressive countries of the world have adopted measures to protect the aged from a life of misery and pauperism. But we in India have not yet become aware of the gravity of the problem. Certain amount of protection in old age is no doubt provided in some establishments. Government servants are covered by old-age pensions. Most municipalities and public utility services and a few public concerns have adopted provident fund benefits some of which are contributory and others non-contributory. In 1941 the Government of Bombay made subscription to the Government Provident Fund compulsory for all its servants. All railway employees and the employees of local and public bodies and a few of the larger public companies give gratuities to their employees on retirement. But for industrial labour outside of Government industrial establishments, pensions on retirement are almost non-existent. Some concerns, of course, do give small pensions to old or faithful workers but these are mostly *ex gratia* and cannot be claimed as of right. Thus we see that thousands of workers are not covered by any form of old age assistance; destitution and beggary is the inevitable lot of many of them, though it is not known how many beggars are recruited from this class. Their number must, indeed, be considerable.

1 Roseman, Alvin: "Old-Age Assistance" in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March 1939.

Old age dependency is with us and it has come to stay since it is largely a result of our industrial development. From what has already been said it must be clear that a grave social problem does exist and will probably remain as serious for many years to come unless we adopt a radical social policy as early as possible. Otherwise, the difficulties to be faced in old age will multiply with the increasing industrialization of India. This problem can be met by instituting old-age pensions for the aged poor by the State. The system should be non-contributory and applicable to all wage-earners who are sixty and over. Old-age benefits should cover at least the bare minimum of physical needs, though one would prefer a slightly generous grant to enable the aged to live under more desirable conditions than were possible during their years of toil. It may be better to pay benefits in kind rather than in cash. Homes should also be provided under proper supervision for those who have no one to care for them. India is second to no other country in the world in her veneration for the aged . Yet thousands of old people in our country drag on a miserable existence uncared for and unprotected--poor old folk, "as full of grief as age, wretched in both". If India's charitable sentiments and resources, together with the State contributions, are harnessed, this major problem of old age dependency can be easily solved.

Neglected and Dependent Mothers and Children.- The problem of dependent mothers and children is not new. Here again the joint family system provides a more or less satisfactory degree of security as the burden of support usually is not intolerable if the families are large enough to distribute the load. Only in our urban areas where the shift is from an agricultural to an industrial society is the need to provide protection against the premature death of the family bread-winner has become much greater. It is not an easy task for the widowed mother of the working class to support her dependent children. To make matters worse, the burden of widowhood falls with blightening effect on the Indian woman who, more than any other woman in the world, is subjected to all kinds of social taboos. In most

cases widows in India have to endure untold miseries as they are seldom trained for economic independence.

According to the 1931 Census, the total number of widows was 25,496,660. Now there must be a greater number as the population has increased much since then. This large number includes all sorts of widows--rich and poor, young and old, pretty and ugly, with children and without children, with jobs and without jobs. The rich widows and those who can remarry do not usually become social problems. Even where remarriage is permissible, the chances of an elderly widower to enter a new marriage are considerably better than those of a widow of the same age. Then again, a widower with children is more likely to want to marry again but a widow with children has a lesser chance to remarry whether she wants to or not. Then there are several orthodox communities where remarriage is not allowed for a widow. It is the group of widows without financial protection but with children which gives rise to a serious problem.

Turning for statistical information to the Census Report of 1931, we find that widows in the population per 1,000, leaving out widows below twenty, were 78 in the age group 20-30; 212 in the age group 30-40; 507 in the age group 40-60; 802 aged 60 and over. The last group naturally comes under old-age dependency. Widowhood between the ages of 30 and 50—the period when children are dependent—consititutes the real economic problem arising from the loss of the bread-winner, particularly of the wage-earning class. The economic problem of widowhood, therefore, assumes its most depressing form when complicated by not only low financial status but also the presence of minor children. The widowed mother must then either seek employment herself or send her children to work early in life, thus denying them the opportunities for development and growth. In either case the children must suffer.

To support themselves and their little ones, widowed mothers take up work in factories, enter domestic service or become coolie women. Thus they are away for nine hours or more and return home at sunset where the burden of household duties awaits them. This means the strain of double employment; naturally after

a heavy day's work, they have little energy or interest left to care for their little children or attend to household duties. During their absence from home, children are left to play on the streets, or to be cared for by old relatives or indifferent neighbours. Is it any wonder if the delinquency rate among children of wage-earning mothers is found to be high? If children are too young it is not uncommon for working mothers to administer opium to make them inactive during the day. An investigation undertaken by the Government of Bombay not long ago revealed the fact that 98% of the infants born to working women in Bombay had opium given to them. Thousands of widowed mothers are thus obliged to neglect their children in order to support them. In these and other ways the outside employment of widows with little children does have serious effects upon themselves and their children. Thus we have in the wage-earning widowed mother a dual responsibility, the social consequences of which are most undesirable and destructive.

Little children are the citizens of tomorrow and the mother renders a service to the State in properly caring for them. The natural home of the child is most important for its growth and development. Hence, the White House Conference declared: "Home life is the highest and finest product of civilization. It is the great moulding force of mind and of character. Children should not be deprived of it except for urgent and compelling reasons. Children of reasonable, efficient and deserving mothers, who are without the support of the normal bread-winner, should, as a rule, be kept with their parents, such aid being given as may be necessary to maintain suitable homes for the rearing of the children." Since most of our middle-aged widows possess no special skill, their earning capacity is limited. Hence, complete maintenance of such dependent families seems to be the only possible way of meeting the problem.

The problem of dependent mothers has given rise to what is known as "Mothers' Pension" movement in the progressive countries of the West. France, Germany, Denmark, New Zealand and America and some other have adopted the pension system. Many of the American States have provided for not

only financial aid but service to the mother in helping her to use the aid properly and in solving the problems which arise in the bringing up of her children. Since dependency of mothers and children arises not only from widowhood but also from desertion, illegitimacy, divorce, imprisonment and the mental and physical incapacity of the fathers, such mothers are also given aid. In our country no such help is available. It is imperative to provide for such pension to prevent mothers with children of the working class drifting from partial support into beggary and pauperism.

The neglect of children is bad enough in the fatherless family where the mother has to work for their support but neglect becomes even greater when children are motherless, as widowed fathers grow irresponsible owing to outside interests. It is from such broken families that the vagrant, the derelict and the delinquent are largely recruited. Since the family is the cradle of humanity and the nursery of civilization, and the good mother its presiding deity, is it not the duty of the State to protect the mother from hazards and thus safeguard the family from catastrophe?

Maternal mortality deprives a large number of children of the mother's love and protection, and leaves them to shift for themselves when they are too young to do so. Therefore, among deaths from preventable causes, the most disastrous, as far as the child is concerned, is maternal mortality. Though accurate data are not available, it is estimated that about 25 mothers die to every 1,000 children born. In other words, since some 10 million babies were born in the year 1936, about 250,000 mothers, or a quarter of a million of the mothers, must have lost their lives in giving birth to them. And many more of those who survived child-birth must have been either weakened or maimed in some way. Furthermore, the number of deaths in themselves do not indicate the seriousness of the consequences to the family, particularly to the children. To them the mother's death or illness at this critical stage means dependency and neglect. According to the Report of the Public Health Commissioner, there were in 1937 some 99,000 deaths

from cholera, a little over 54,000 deaths from small-pox and about 28,000 from plague. But maternal mortality is greater than deaths from any of these. In view of this fact does it not seem strange that our efforts to protect motherhood should be so insignificant compared to the sums spent on the campaign against cholera, small-pox and plague?

To prevent maternal and infant mortality and to give protection to motherhood, several countries have introduced maternity insurance. But in India the need for such protection is much greater because of the universality of marriage, low wages, extreme poverty and the high rate of maternal mortality. Unfortunately, even now there is no all-India legislation to give protection to working women in childbirth. This matter is still considered as a provincial subject. However, we have to be thankful that some of the provincial governments have passed legislation providing for maternity benefits. The first provincial legislative measure was the Bombay Maternity Benefits Act of 1929 and this was followed by the passing of a similar Act in the Central Provinces in 1931. These were the first Acts of their kind in India. Since then the Provinces of Madras, Bengal, Sind, Assam, the United Provinces, Ajmer-Merwara and Delhi have also passed maternity benefit legislation. It is interesting to note that the Bengal Legislature passed a second Act known as the Bengal Maternity Benefit (Tea Estates) Act, 1941 for women employed in tea plantations. In the same year the Mines Maternity Benefits Act was passed by the Central Legislature. Among Indian States Mysore, Baroda and Cochin provide maternity benefits. In view of the pressing need and the appalling suffering and poverty of our working women, it is heart-rending to think that out of the large group of women workers in the whole of India only a small proportion enjoys maternity benefits. However, we have to be thankful that at least this much has been done in the way of a beginning.

In spite of these measures, a large number of women do not enjoy their benefits because of their ignorance and economic helplessness, and because of the unscrupulousness of some em-

ployers. We need therefore a vigilant public opinion to compel the provincial governments to enforce proper observance of these measures. It is encouraging to note that some organizations and industries have set up maternity benefits voluntarily. The Bombay Municipality, for example, started a maternity benefit scheme for its *halalkhore* and scavenging women in 1928. By this scheme the classes benefited are given leave on full pay for a period not exceeding 42 consecutives days. In Assam voluntary maternity benefit schemes have been adopted by almost every tea estate of repute. Planters in Madras decided early in 1939 to pay a bonus and bear charges in connection with the free feeding of the mother for periods of three weeks each before entry into and after leaving hospital. So also many of the jute mills have adopted a maternity benefit scheme.

The double purpose of Maternity Benefit is to provide the extra money needed for medical care before and after child-birth and a compulsory period of rest to the mother before and after delivery without any loss in income. Since the general standard of living of the working class family is so low, the rates of maternal and infant mortality so high, the poverty of the people so great and the medical facilities so inadequate, there can be little doubt that some form of maternity benefit would be of great value to the health of the woman worker and her child at a most critical period in the lives of both. Now that the principle of maternity benefit has been accepted, every effort must be made to extend it throughout India by legislation, and to encourage other employers who do not come under the law to adopt it voluntarily to meet both the needs of the working woman and the social purpose of protecting the life and health of both mother and child. If the extension of the system is accompanied by adequate public health service, it will, no doubt, contribute much towards the reduction of mortality of mothers and dependency and neglect of children.

Problem of the Physically Handicapped.—Though the extent of the problem of physically handicapped is not as great as of sickness, yet its seriousness is seen in the tendency of the crippled, the blind, the deaf and the dumb to take to begging because of

our natural sympathy for them. It is not to be wondered, therefore, if a good part of the beggar population is made up of them. In most of the countries of the West the problem of dependence arising from infirmity and affliction is met by invalidity insurance. This is done in some twenty-one countries. In Great Britain, the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, invalidity is covered by health insurance.

In our country there is great indifference with regard to this problem. No doubt, the State provides a few institutions for the deaf-mutes of whom there are some 150,000 and for the blind of whom there are about 600,000 in our population. These institutions are supplemented by a few private ones. But the existing provisions are very meagre indeed. In the absence of any scheme to care for the thousands of physically handicapped, vagrancy and beggar legislation has been found to be practically useless to combat the issue. There is a great need, therefore, to devise a carefully thought-out relief system of caring for these unfortunates—the physically handicapped.

Reviewing the problem of India's pauperism and dependency we find that it is mainly due to the cultural stagnation and the social drift of the people and the adoption of Western industrialism. Old institutions are broken and thrown into disuse without new ones being built in accordance with Indian thought and life. Western industrialism has come to us with its slums, low-incomes, accidents, occupational diseases, uncertainty of employment and super-annuation. The decay of agricultural occupations, of home and subsidiary industries, has further accentuated the problem of poverty and dependency. Decency, health, mutual aid, security, have all been overwhelmed and lost in the whirlpool of competition. The family is splintered like glass on the rock of economic insufficiency. Irresponsibility and desertion are creating the criminal and the beggar. The legislators are inactive, paralyzed by the immensity of our social problems. In the meanwhile all these gathering sub-social currents are disturbing the placidity of Indian life.

Under these circumstances we can ill-afford to lag behind

in providing social security for the less fortunate in our country but we cannot stop there. Social security is only a half-way house. We have to strike at the root cause of our social problems -the economic system. The present war has made it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that there is something radically wrong in our economic order. The same causes which bring about the unspeakable poverty and misery of the masses are also responsible for the large scale massacre of human beings and the irrecoverable destruction of property that is going on today. While our immediate task is to provide security for the poor against hazards, our main concern should be to bring about a new social order which will ensure not only the creation of wealth but even more its better distribution, thus eliminating poverty and ushering in peace and goodwill among men.

APPENDIX

I

Approximate Personnel and Expenditure of the (1) *Shelter*, (2) *Industrial Home*, (3) *Infirmary and Asylum and* (4) *Work House or Penitentiary*.—It is difficult to give an exact idea of the personnel of a new institution and the expenditure that may have to be incurred on its maintenance, and the difficulty of even an approximate guess increases when the institution contemplated is of a complex nature with an indefinite number of inmates, some of whom may remain in the institution for an indefinite period, while others may be able to do productive work and earn a part of their keep. We shall not, therefore, attempt any exact estimate of figures for the recurring and non-recurring expenditure shown against each item or institution; the figures are given so that the Committee working on the execution of such a Scheme may have a rough idea of the liabilities that would be involved.

		Salary p.m. Rs.
I.(A)	*Personnel and Estimate of Expenditure for the Shelter.*	
(1)	Supervisor–[1] ...	100–5–150–10–200+C.A.Rs. 25 +Free Quarters (or Rent of Rs. 50 p.m.).
(2)	Part-time Medical Attendant ...	50
(3)	Clerk-typist (at least a Matriculate)	55–4–115–5–140
(4)	(*a*) Cook (with board & lodging) ...	30–1–40
	(*b*) One or two Cook's mates or assistants according to the number of inmates (with free board, quarters and clothing) ...	10–½–20 each.
	(After some experience of the working of the Shelter, they may be chosen from among the inmates) ...	
(5)	Peon (with free quarters and clothing. May be chosen from among the inmates) ...	25–½–30.
(6)	2 Watchmen (Day and Night) with free quarters and clothing ...	28–½–35 each.

1 Preferably a married man so that his wife may be helpful with regard to the female side of the Shelter. Payment of some remuneration may be allowed to her. He may be a qualified person from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay. If the Shelter is in its own building, the Supervisor may be provided with suitable quarters. If not, he may be provided with the actual amount of rent or Rs. 50 as House Rent Allowance whichever be less. If the Shelter can be located at the King George V Infirmary and Lady Dhunbai Home, slightly modified arrangements for personnel will have to be suggested.

(7)	2 Sweepers (with free quarters, clothing and board. May be chosen from among the inmates)[1] ...	10–½–20 each	
(8)	3 Arresting Agents ...	40	each + clothing.
		541–785.*	

Over and above these expenses of personnel, there will be other recurring and non-recurring expenses at the Shelter. The figures may be taken as approximate :—

		Non-recurring initial expenditure Rs.	Recurring *Annual* expenditure. Rs.
(1)	Rent of the Building at Rs. 150–200 p.m. (if one has to be hired) ...	......	1,800–2,400
(2*a*)	Food for the inmates at Rs. 15/- p.m. per person at the present time and Rs. 8/- p.m. per person in normal times. Counting an *average daily attendance* of 30 inmates—Rs. 300 to 600 p.m. ...	......	2,880–5,400.
(2*b*)	Clothing for the inmates—500–at Rs. 12 per person—shirt, shorts and forage or other cap for men ; Sari, skirt, blouse for women ...	......	6,000
(3)	Clothing for the peon, 2 watchmen, 2 cook's mates (2 coats, 2 pairs of pants or trousers, buttons, 1 forage cap, each p.a., and 1 belt and 1 puttee extra every 2 years to each watchman and to 3 Arresting Agents)	......	275
(4)	Stationery ...	......	200
(5)	Photographic records (1,200 persons p.a.) ...		900
(6)	Sundries like Telephone (Govt. to be requested to provide free), Electricity, etc. ...	......	500
(7)	Furniture for Office and Dormitories	} 2,000.	......
(8)	Utensils for cooking and serving ...		
(9)	Chattais, Mattresses, a few cots for the sick, etc.		
	Provident Fund for the employees about	......	416–660.
		2,000.	12,971–16,835.
	Add Salaries at Rs. 541–785 p.m. ...	......	6,492– 9,420.
	Total annual expenditure for the Shelter ...		19,463–25,755.

(*B*) Contribution for about 50 inmates to the King George V Memorial Infirmary. @ 0-10-0 to 0-12-0 per day per person. Rs. 14,000

1 Free quarters will have to be given to all the employees if the Industrial Home is situate outside the City.

* Dearness allowance will have to be paid to most of the regular salaried staff for the duration of the war and some time after.

II. *Personnel and approximate expenditure for the Industrial Home.*

The following personnel is suggested for the Home :—

(1)	Guardian Superintendent ...	300–15–450–20–500 p.m. + 50 C.A. (F.Q.)
(2)	Assistant Guardian Superintendent (preferably a Graduate of the Tata Institute—Same as Shelter Supervisor—May be employed a little after the number of inmates begins to increase) ...	100–5–150–10–200 + 20 C.A. (F.Q.)
(3)	Textile teacher ...	75–5–150 ,,
(4)	Stenographer-clerk (at least a Matriculate) ...	75–4–115–5–160. ,,
(5)	Clerk-typist (at least a Matriculate. May be employed later when inmates increase. One of these must know First Aid) ...	55–4–115–5–140. ,,
(6)	Accounts and Stores Clerk ...	55–4–115–5–140 ,,
(7)	Store-keeper (may be employed later when the number of inmates increases) ...	55–4–115–5–140 ,,
(8)	Part-time Medical Attendant Rs. 75 p.m. ...	75 ,,
(9)	Honorary Psychiatrist...Honorarium	50–100 (*i.e.*, 600–200–1,200 p.a.)
(10)	Assistant Psychiatrist ...	150–10–250.
(11)	3 Wards or Guards (Both for supervision and bringing persons from the Shelter to the Industrial Home) ...	30–½–35 each (F.Q. & Clothing at Rs. 25 p.a. each).
(12)	2 Peons ...	25–½–30 each do.
(13)	2 Watchmen (Day and Night) ...	28–½–35 each do.
(14)	1 Cook for first 50 persons and more to be employed gradually as numbers increase ...	35–1–45 (F.Q. and Board).
	(for 100 to 150 inmates, 2) (for 160 to 225 inmates, 3) ... (for 250 and over 4)	30–1–40 each (F.Q. and Board).
	(Some may be trained from among the inmates in which case a lower scale of salary may be paid)	
(15)	2 Cook's mates or assistants upto 100 persons ...	15–2–20 each (F.Q., Board and Clothing).
	(3 cook's mates upto 110 to 150 persons) (4 cook's mates upto 160 to 200 persons) (5 cook's mates upto 210 to 300 persons) (may be chosen mostly from among the inmates)	10–½–20 each (FQ., Board and Clothing).

1 May be even a retired official with some administrative experience. A married man may be preferred so that the wife can help on the female side of the work on payment of some remuneration.

(16)	1 Bearer to teach the work of a Bearer to suitable inmates ...	25–½–35	do.
(17)	5 Sweepers (may be chosen from among the inmates) ...	2 @ 15–½–20 each	do.
		3 @ 10–½–20	do.
(18)	1 Barber ...	30–1–40.	
(19)	1 Mistry or Carpenter ...	60–3–75.	
(20)	5 Dhobies ...	2 @ 30 each.	
		1 @ 25 each.	
		2 @ 15 each. (from among the inmates).	
(21)	2 Malis (others to learn and assist on small remuneration) ...	25–½–35 each (F.Q. and Clothing)	
	Total Rs. ...	1,661–2,680 p.m. or 19,932–32,160 p.a.	

	Other Recurring Expenditure	Approximate annual Expenditure Rs.
(1*a*)	Food for the inmates at the rate of Rs. 20 per person now and Rs. 10 per person in normal times, beginning with 50 and ultimately catering for 300 persons. (Slightly higher cost as the inmates will be doing manual labour and transport charges will have to be added). Now for 50 to 300 inmates per day. ... (Normally for 50 to 300 inmates per day 6,000–36,000)[1]	12,000–72,000.
(1*b*)	Clothing for about 700 persons @ Rs. 12 per person p.a. ...	8,400.
(2)	Taxes, water charges, etc. ...	
(3)	Clothing for 15 to 20 employees @ Rs. 25 per person p.a. ...	375–500.
(4)	Stationery ...	600.
(5)	Sundries like Telephone (Govt. to be requested to instal free), lighting, phenyle or disinfectants, etc. ...	600.
(6)	Medicines, etc. ...	300.
(7)	Provision for Provident Fund Contribution ...	1,466–2,435.
(8)	Raw Materials (Cotton, yarn, seeds, etc). ...	
	Total ...	23,741–84,835.

	Non-Recurring Expenditure	Approximate Expenditure Rs.
(1)	Structures :—I would suggest that the *per capita* expenditure for living accommodation should be kept within Rs. 50 to 100. The same standard or less may be kept for the industrial sheds for 300 persons. (To be erected, of course, gradually as	

1 As against these expenses of maintenance of the able-bodied inmates, there will be some income accruing from their work at the Home or earnings from outside as soon as they are employed on productive work after training. This may be roughly estimated at least at about Rs. 30,000 p.a.

	need arises, though the planning may be done with a view to provide for 300 inmates and land may be reserved for further expansion as found necessary). (Each Chembur Shed has cost about Rs. 700 and can accommodate from 60 to 75 inmates, the *per capita* cost being Rs. 10 to 12) ...	30,000–60,000.
(2)	Furniture, utensils, chattais, mattresses, cots,, medical accessories, Accident or First Aid Kit, etc. (Rs. 1,000 for 50, Rs. 6,000 for 300) ...	1,000–6,000.
(3)	Industrial equipment for 50 to 300 persons ...	3,000–12,000.
(4)	Quarters for 7 officers and clerks ...	23,000–25,000.
(5)	Quarters for 15 to 20 inferior staff ...	3,000–5,000.
		60,000–1,08,000.
	Total Recurring Annual Expenditure Rs. ...	43,673–1,16,995.
	and Non-Recurring Expenditure for the Industrial Home ... Rs. ...	60,000–1,08,000.

III. Personnel and approximate expenditure of the Asylum and Infirmary. The expenses are roughly estimated as follows :—

		Non-recurring Rs.	Annual Recurring Rs.
(1)	*Housing*[1] for the aged and infirm @ Rs. 100 per person for 300 persons in the initial stages (to be provided by stages for 50 or 100 at a time) ...	30,000.	
(2)	Feeding @ Rs. 15 per person now and Rs. 8 per person in normal times	......	28,800–54,000.
(3)	*Clothing* @ Rs. 20 per person per annum ...	......	6,000.
(4)	Medicines, etc. @ Re. 1 per person per month on an average ...	......	3,600.
	Additional Personnel for the Asylum and Infirmary		
(5)	(*a*) Medical Attendant—same as for Industrial Home, Rs.75–100p.m.	......	900–1,200.
	(*b*) 1 Matron @ Rs. 100–10–200 p.m. + Rs. 15 p.m. Uniform Allowance	......	1,380–2,580.
	(*c*) 2 Nurses @ Rs. 50–5–100 p.m. + Rs. 10 p.m. Uniform Allowance	......	1,440–2,640.
(6)	Attendants, Ayahs, Ward Boys, Sweepers—to be drafted from among the able-bodied inmates of the Industrial Home already provided for. If extra Rs. 5 p.m. is given them—for about 30 such employees ...	......	1,800.
(7)	1 Barber @ 30–1–40 p.m. ...	......	360–480.
(8)	2 Dhobies @ Rs. 30 each p.m. ...		720.
(9)	2 Compounders @ Rs. 40–2–60 + F.Q.		960–1,440.

1 I would propose a cheaper structure with a brick wall about 4 feet high from the ground, topped with bamboo matting wall upto the roof, a plinth of 1½ ft. height, a Shahbad stone-paved flooring, asbestos sheet roofing and ordinary cots and mattresses to sleep on. To start with, the sheds at the Chembur Evacuation Camp will also serve the purpose.

			Non-recurring Rs.	Annual Recurring Rs.
(10)	Provision for Provident Fund	...	......	370–620.
(11)	Quarters for Matron and Nurses	...	7,000	......
	Total Rs.	...	37,000	46,330–75,080.

(The same supervisory, clerical and culinary staff as of the Industrial Home will suffice for this Asylum and Infirmary also at least for a year or two).

IV. Personnel and approximate expenditure of the Work-House or Penitentiary.

The expenses are roughly estimated as follows :—

		Non-recurring Rs.	Annual Recurring Rs.
(1)	*Quarters* for about 20 to 25 inmates to start with and provision to be kept for about 50 according to increasing need @ Rs. 100 per person	2,500–5,000.	
(2)	*Feeding* [1] (25) @ Rs. 10 p.m. (Will come in after about 2 years) ...	......	3,000.
(3)	*Clothing* (25) @ Rs. 20 p.a. ...	......	500.
(4)	Medicines, lighting, sundries, etc. ...	......	500.
(5)	Warden 75–5–125 p.m. Free Quarters	3,000.	900–1,500.
(6)	2 Guards 30–½–40 p.m. each, Free Quarters ...	800.	720–960.
(7)	Provision for Provident Fund ...	......	135–205.
	Total Rs. ...	6,300–8,800.	5,755–6,665.

APPENDIX

II

Further possibilities of employment of the able-bodied at Chembur. Dairying and Agri-Horticultural industries.—We have stated in paragraph — that it would be somewhat difficult and hazardous at the commencement of our Scheme to try to found agri-horticultural colonies in outlying, undeveloped parts of the province with a highly handicapped population such as of beggars. However, if the Industrial Home for rehabilitating beggars is located at the Evacuation Camp at Chembur, after a year or two, there will be very good possibilities of starting DAIRYING and AGRI-HORTICULTURAL INDUSTRIES there with the help of the able-bodied healthy inmates.

1 These persons should be able to produce some portion of their own food and clothing by working on the farm, dairy or weaving looms.

There is a large tract of land adjoining the Camp and sufficient land therefrom can be made available to erect 1 to 5 stables accommodating 200 buffaloes each with the necessary washing places, troughs, milking sheds, store-room for fodder and shed for hay, dung receptacles, sheds for calves and quarters for milkmen, herdsmen, sweepers and others. There is an excellent market for milk in the City within easy reach of Chembur and fresh milk can be despatched in vans to the City twice a day. There being fairly large grazing areas in the neighbourhood on the island itself, the dry buffaloes need not be sent out and new buffaloes in lactation bought every year, as the buffaloes can be covered by good stud bulls kept for the purpose at the Dairy Farm itself, thus rendering the production of milk at a cheaper rate possible. Water, which will be required in large quantities, can be had from more wells dug for the purpose as well as from the tappings of the Tulsi and Vihar Mains.

Vegetables can be grown in the same adjoining land and cow-dung cake manure easily available on the Dairy Farm will be very useful for intensive cultivation. Further plots of land of fairly good fertility are available as for instance with the Bombay Municipality at Deonar and a portion of this can be used both for growing *cereal* crops and vegetables, in which case the Municipal Scheme of supplying sewage effluent from the Dadar Purification Works to agriculturists at Chembur can be expedited and may prove very useful to the Home as well as profitable to the Municipality. Fairly extensive grasslands are also to be found on the island hills and flats and in the neighbouring district and they can serve both as pastures and fodder supply areas. Green fodder can also be raised for the buffaloes on the farms. The milk can find a ready market in Government and Municipal Hospitals, Maternity Homes and other institutions, and one feels the produce of 1,000 milch cattle will not be difficult to dispose of.

For every stable of 200 cattle about 30 persons of inferior cadre can be easily employed as milkmen, attendants, herdsmen, sweepers, cleaners, labourers and other such staff,

whereas drivers dairymen, supervising staff and some milk-men at first may have to be engaged from outside.

Approximate Expenditure.—The initial cost of livestock, sheds, store-room, utensils, van or truck, etc., for a unit of 200 milch cattle will be approximately Rs. 30,000, the salaries of the experts and supervisory staff may come to about Rs. 500 p.m. and the cost of fodder to about Rs. 4,500, to 6,000 p.m., whereas the wages of inferior labour staff will vary from Rs. 450 to 750 p.m. according as a smaller or larger number of the inmates of the Industrial Home is employed for the purpose. Details of the personnel required and the estimates of expenditure can be obtained when required. One very important point, however, about the dairy industry is that while there is a certain amount of risk in case the cattle catch some infectious disease, there is the possibility of income from the very moment the industry is started and fair prospects of profit if it is run well, because of the very good market for milk provided by the City. The Dairy will further help in slightly increasing the milk supply of the City which is so notoriously deficient and dear. Five stables of 200 cattle, each started one after another as experience is gained, will, besides, engage about 150 to 200 of the inmates in dairying alone in due course, whereas the ancillary agri-horticultural operations may absorb an equal number of men and women in course of time. Both these are, moreover, primary producing industries dependent on each other and staple industries of the country at that. From the prospects of employment elsewhere of the workers in similar institutions, they will afford excellent training grounds at the Industrial Home for the inmates. The inmates may further be able to produce some of the primary necessaries of life for their own use. The Industrial Home or what may become an *Agrico-Industrial Colony* will thus come to be founded in due course on a fairly solid foundation of key industries for its existence on what may become and should at least be aimed at as a self-supporting basis with regard to the production of *food*, *clothing* and *shelter*.

APPENDIX

III

Cost of a systematic and scientific handling of a social malady cheaper than its relief by unorganised charity.—In the history of the attempt to solve the Beggar Problem in the City of Bombay as well as in other places in India, the bogey of numbers and cost has always frightened the protagonists of anti-beggar legislation. We shall show by a few facts and figures given below that a systematic and scientific handling of the problem of beggary is not as costly as it is usually imagined in the absence of reliable data and is certainly almost always less costly in the long run to society at large than the amount of money and effort involved and almost wasted through desultory, scattered and unorganised charity. This is no place to enter upon a long dissertation on the subject. We will therefore content ourselves with a few facts and figures.

The first important point to remember in this connection is that all beggars are not so by force of circumstances or helpless destitution. Almost half or more than half in every group of beggars may be so by choice. It pays them better to beg than to live by honest work for, sometimes, honest work in our present social structure is not as remunerative as begging. Secondly, a fair number amongst the professional beggars consists of able-bodied men, women and children. Thirdly, some of the defective, disabled and diseased beggars are traded in by relatives, who can afford to support them. Fourthly, the wives or women and children of a goodly number of male bread-earners take to the profession of begging because they have no established homes, have plenty of leisure and can add to the family income by easy money. A number of peasants and landless labourers seem to migrate to the city during the off season presumably in search of work but end up by taking to begging in streets. There are a few amongst the beggars who are casually employed and another few, who, while fully employed, take to begging during liesure hours and on sundays and holidays, because they have found by experience that they can earn a few extra rupees without much ado by trading on their wits. These different classes

taking to begging in a vast and crowded city through different motives, form a substantially large portion of its beggar population. As soon as legislation for the prevention of beggary is introduced in a certain area and its provisions strictly enforced, these classes of beggars almost vanish in no time. This has been the experience in various cities in India and outside where the experiment has been tried, sometimes leaving an incredibly low figure of the destitute to be admitted to the home, asylum or work-house established for the purpose.

Bearing the above in mind, let us now take the numbers of secular beggars in the city of Bombay at 5,000 and that on an average the numerous charity trusts, appropriate institutions and the philanthropic general public spend *annas* 8 *per day* per person, though several beggars in various cities of India have been known to earn from annas 12 to Rs. 3 and 5 per day, when their day is luckier or their beggar bowl fuller. On this modest scale of Rs. 15 per month per person, the pious gentry of Bombay may be spending on the 5,000 beggars a princely sum of ***Rs.*** *9 lacs per annum.*

Let us on a conservative estimate put the figures of the various types of beggars described above, who will make themselves scarce on the introduction and enforcement of beggar legislation, at 50% in which case about 1,000 able-bodied and 1,500 defective and disabled may be left in the city for us to tackle, though 2,500 is rather a high estimate. At the rates of maintenance prevailing in various similar domiciliary institutions in the city and the mofussil at present as well as before the war, we may have to spend on an average Rs. 10 p.m. per person on the 1,000 able-bodied and Rs. 15 p.m. on the 1,500 infirm and defective. The cost on the 2,500 would amount to Rs. 32,500 p.m. or about Rs. 4 lacs per annum, which is certainly much less than Rs. 9 lacs spent aimlessly by indiscriminate charity with all the evil consequences of idling, malingering, spreading of disease, nuisance to the general populace, bad example to the children, etc. Calculating this cost of Rs. 4 lacs per annum on about 5 lacs of bread-winners in the city with a population

of about 15 lacs, the cost of a systematic and scientific handling of this grave social malady would come to As. 12 or Re. 1 per annum.

Taking the population of 61,000 beggars in the Province of Bombay with a total Population of about 2 crores and supposing As. 4 or 8 per day per person were spent by charity endowments and other philanthropic public to maintain them, the cost to the community would amount to ***Rs.*** 54 or 108 *lacs a year* on their haphazard, wasteful and almost fruitless maintenance. If we take half of these or 30,000 to be rehabilitated on a systematic basis and there are 15,000 ablebodied and 15,000 handicapped beggars, at the rate of Rs. 10/- p.m. per person for the able-bodied and Rs. 15 p.m. for the handicapped, the annual expenditure would amount to about Rs. (18 + 27 =) 45 *lacs per annum* and society would reap the benefits that accrue from a systematic and scientific solution of the problem. If this expense were spread over 50 lacs of bread-winners or families in the province, the per family cost would come to As. 14 to Re. 1 per annum, not to mention the fact that a very large number of superior and inferior staff would be employed usefully and gainfully in the useful work of rehabilitating a large number of the handicapped and demoralised section of the body politic.

Taking the beggar population of India of about 14 lacs as per the census of 1931, the cost to the country at As. 4 or 8 per day per person would amount to Rs. 12¾ or 25½ *crores per annum* ; whereas on our usual calculations as bove, the maintenance of 3½ lacs of able-bodied and 3½ lacs of defective and disabled persons at Rs. 10 and 15 p.m. per person respectively would cost the country (4.20+6.30)=***Rs.*** 10½ *crores.* Taking about 8 crores of bread-winners out of a population of 33½ crores, the incidence of cost per family would come to Re. 1-4-0 per annum and about 70,000 persons would be gainfully employed as superior and inferior supervisory and welfare staff on an average salary of more than Rs. 40/- per month, getting Rs. 3¼ crores per annum in wages, which may also solve a part of our problem of educated unemployment.

Besides, a majority of the able-bodied beggars may be able to earn their keep after a training of 3 to 6 months or a year in an appropriate institution. We have not calculated the earnings of such persons through skilled or unskilled labour while calculating the above expenditure, and even some of the handicapped population may be able to do some productive work and contribute towards their maintenance. What is even more important from a long-range view of social health and amelioration is that the insane, feeble-minded, those suffering from communicable or hereditary diseases and a large number of such other physically undesirable may be prevented from multiplying their kind and increasing their share of burden on society.

Further, towards the above expenditure on institutional relief to the beggars, several existing Trusts, Endowments, and Domiciliary Institutions will be able to contribute their quota and the cost to the public and to the State treasury will not be so large. In fact in the Province of Bombay, there were in 1920 about 349[1] such institutions sheltering and feeding about 4,035 beggars per day at a cost of Rs. 3,95,801 per annum, whereas in the City of Bombay, the few known special charity endowments for the specific purpose were feeding about 300 persons per day at an annual expenditure of Rs. 27,834[2].

1 The list is incomplete.

2 See Sethna Committee Report, Appendix 5, p. 43.

BEGGAR LEGISLATION IN INDIA

APPENDIX

IV

PART I

Bengal Vagrancy Act 1943

PART III—Acts of the Bengal Legislature.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

NOTIFICATION

No. 986-L.—23rd October, 1943.—The following Act of the Bengal Legislature, having been assented to in His Majesty's name by the Governor, is hereby published for general information:—

CONTENTS

Chapter I

PRELIMINARY

Section

Chapter II

PROCEDURE

Chapter III

RECEIVING CENTRES AND VAGRANTS' HOME

Chapter IV

PENALTIES AND MISCELLANEOUS

BENGAL ACT VII OF 1943

The Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943

(*Passed by the Bengal Lagislature*)

[Assent of the Governor was first published in the *Calcutta Gazette Extraordinary* of the 25th October 1943.]

An Act to provide for dealing with vagrancy in Bengal.

WHEREAS it is expedient to make provision for dealing with vagrancy in Bengal;

It is hereby enacted as follows :—

CHAPTER I

Preliminary

1. *Short title, extent and commencement*: (1) This Act may be called the Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943.

(2) It extends to the whole of Bengal.

(3) It shall come into force in Calcutta at once and in such other areas on such other dates as the Provincial Government may, by notification in the *Official Gazette*, direct.

2. *Definitions* :—In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,—

(1) "Board" means the Vagrancy Advisory Board established under sub-section (1) of section 3;

(2) " Calcutta " means the town of Calcutta as defined in section 3 of the Calcutta Police Act, 1866. *Ben. Act IV of* 1866, together with the suburbs of Calcutta as defined by notification under section 1 of the Calcutta Suburban Police Act, 1866 *Ben. Act II of* 1866 ;

(3) " child " means a person under the age of fourteen years ;

(4) " Controller " means the Controller of Vagrancy appointed under sub-section (1) of section 4 ;

(5) "person of European extraction " has the same meaning as in the European Vagrancy Act, 1874 *IX of* 1874 ;

(6) " prescribed " means prescribed by rules made under this Act ;

(7) " receiving centre " means a house or institution for the reception and temporary detention of vagrants, provided by the Provincial Government or certified as such under sub-section (1) of section 12 ;

(8) " Special Magistrate " means a Magistrate empowered to act as such under section 5 ;

(9) " vagrant " means a person not being of European extraction found asking for alms in any public place, or wandering about or remaining in any public place in such condition or manner as makes it likely that such person exists by asking for alms but does not include a person collecting money or asking for food or gift for a prescribed purpose ;

(10) " vagrants' home " means an institution provided by the Provincial Government under sub-section (1) of section 13 for the permanent detention of vagrants.

3. Vagrancy Advisory Board :—(1) The Provincial Government as soon as possible after the commencement of this Act shall establish a Board to be called the Vagrancy Advisory Board.

(2) The Board shall be constituted in the manner prescribed, subject to the condition that the number of the members of the Board shall not be less than ten.

(3) The function of the Board shall be to advise the Provincial Government on all matters relating to the control of vagrancy and in particular on the administration of this Act and for the aforementioned purposes any member of the Board may enter and inspect at any time any receiving centre or vagrants' home.

(4) The Board may, with the previous approval of the Provincial Government, make regulations to provide for,—

(*a*) the times and places at which its meetings shall be held;

(*b*) the issue of notices concerning such meetings; and

(*c*) the conduct of business thereat.

4. *Appointment of Controller of Vagrancy and his assistants*:

(1) For carrying out the purposes of this Act the Provincial Government may appoint a person to be Controller of Vagrancy together with such other persons to assist him as it thinks fit.

(2) Persons appointed under sub-section (1) shall exercise such powers as may be conferred and perform such functions as may be required by or under this Act.

5. *Special Magistrates*: For the purposes of Chapter II of this Act the Provincial Government may empower any Presidency Magistrate in Calcutta and any Magistrate of the first class elsewhere to act as a Special Magistrate.

CHAPTER II

Procedure

6. *Power to require apparent vagrant to appear before Special Magistrate*: Any police officer authorised in this behalf by the Commissioner of Police in Calcutta and by the District Magistrate elsewhere may require any person who is apparently a vagrant to accompany him or any other police officer to, and to appear before, a Special Magistrate.

7. *Summary inquiry in respect of apparent vagrant and declaration of person to be a vagrant by Special Magistrate*:

(1) When a person is brought before a Special Magistrate under section 6, such Special Magistrate shall make a summary inquiry in the prescribed manner into the circumstances and character of such person, and if, after hearing anything which such person may wish to say he is satisfied that such person is a vagrant, he shall record a declaration to this effect and the provisions of this Act relating to vagrants shall thereupon apply to such peron.

(2) If on making the summary inquiry referred to in sub-section (1) the Special Magistrate is not satisfied that the person brought before him under section 6 is a vagrant such person shall forthwith be released.

(3) A Special Magistrate recording a declaration under sub-section (1) that a person is a vagrant shall forthwith send a certified copy of such declaration to the Controller, and to the officer-in-charge of the receiving centre to which such vagrant is sent under sub-section (1) of section 8.

8. Detention in receiving centre and medical examination of vagrant: (1) When a person has been declared to be a vagrant under sub-section (1) of section 7 he shall forthwith be sent in the manner prescribed to the nearest receiving centre and there handed over to the custody of the officer-in-charge of such receiving centre, and such vagrant shall be detained in such receiving centre until he is sent therefrom to a vagrants' home under sub-section (1) of section 9.

(2) As soon as possible after the commencement of the detention of a vagrant in a receiving centre the medical officer of such receiving centre shall with such medical help as may be necessary medically examine the vagrant in the manner prescribed as quickly as is consistent with the circumstances of the case and shall thereupon furnish the officer-in-charge of the receiving centre with a medical report regarding the health and bodily condition of the vagrant.

(3) The medical report referred to in sub-section (2) shall state *inter alia*,—

(*a*) .the sex and age of the vagrant;

(*b*) whether the vagrant is a leper;

(*c*) from what, if any, communicable diseases other than leprosy the vagrant is suffering;

(*d*) whether the vagrant is insane or mentally deficient;

(*e*) what is the general state of health and bodily condition of the vagrant and for which, if any, of the prescribed types of work he is fit.

9. *Procedure for sending vagrant to vagrants' home*:

(1) On receipt of the medical report referred to in sub-section (2) of section 8 the officer-in-charge of a receiving centre shall, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made, send the vagrant in the prescribed manner to such vagrants' home as the Controller may by general or special order in this behalf direct, and the said officer-in-charge shall along with such vagrant send to the Manager of the said vagrants' home,—

(*a*) the certified copy of the declaration made under sub-section (1) of section 7 relating to such vagrant which is to be sent to such officer-in-charge under sub-section (3) of the said section, and

(*b*) the said medical report.

(2) When a vagrant is sent to a vagrants' home under the provisions of sub-section (1) he shall be handed over to the custody of the Manager of such vagrants' home and shall be detained therein, or in a vagrants' home to which he may be transferred under section 16, until duly discharged therefrom under section 18.

(3) In issuing any order under sub-section (1) the Controller shall ensure that the following classes of vagrants, namely,—

(*a*) lepers,

(*b*) the insane or mentally deficient,

(*c*) those suffering from communicable diseases other than leprosy,

(*d*) children,

are segregated from each other and from vagrants who do not belong to any of the aforementioned classes and shall also ensure that the male vagrants are segregated from the female vagrants:

Provided that the provisions of this sub-section in respect of children may be relaxed as prescribed.

10. Externment of vagrant from area in which the Act is in force: (1) If after an inquiry made under sub-section (1) of section 7 the Special Magistrate is satisfied that the person brought before him under section 6 is a vagrant but, in the course of such inquiry, it has appeared that the vagrant was not born in the area in which this Act is in force or has not been continuously resident therein for more than one year, the Special Magistrate, after making such further inquiry, if any, as he may deem necessary, may by order in writing direct the said vagrant to leave the said area within such time and by such route or routes as may be stated in the order and not to return thereto without the permission in writing of the Controller, and in such case, notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1) of section 7, the provisions of sections 8 and 9 shall not apply to such vagrant:

Provided that if the Special Magistrate deems it necessary to make any further inquiry as aforesaid in respect of such vagrant, the vagrant shall be detained pending conclusion of the said inquiry in such receiving centre as the Controller may by general or special order in this behalf direct and for this purpose shall be sent thereto in the manner prescribed and there handed over to the custody of the officer-in-charge of such receiving centre, and shall, while he is so detained, be subject to the rules of management and discipline referred to in sub-section (1) of section 15.

(2) The Controller shall not give the permission referred to in sub-section (1) unless, if the vagrant had been detained in a vagrants' home, such vagrant would have been eligible to have been discharged therefrom under the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 18.

(3) When a vagrant against whom an order has been made under sub-section (1) fails to comply with such order within the time specified therein, or after complying with the said order returns without the permission in writing of the Controller to any place within the area referred to in the said order, such vagrant may be arrested without a warrant by any police officer

and shall be liable, on conviction before a Magistrate, to be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months.

11. Validity of custody and detention of vagrant: A declaration that a person is a vagrant recorded by a Special Magistrate under sub-section (1) of section 7 shall be sufficient authority to any person to retain such vagrant in his custody when such person is under the provisions of this Act or of any rule made thereunder conveying a vagrant from the Court of a Special Magistrate to a receiving centre or, from a receiving centre to a vagrants' home or from one vagrants' home to another and to the officer-in-charge of a receiving centre and to the Manager of a vagrants' home for detaining such vagrant in accordance with the provisions of this Act in a receiving centre of vagrants' home, as the case may be.

CHAPTER III

Receiving centres and vagrants' home

12. Provision of receiving centres: (1) The Provincial Government may provide and maintain together with the necessary furniture and establishment one or more receiving centres at such place or places as it thinks fit, or may certify by notification in the *Official Gazette* any existing charitable or other institution, subject to the prior consent of the controlling authority of such institution and on such conditions as may be mutually agreed upon between the Provincial Government and the said authority, to be a receiving centre for the purposes of this Act.

(2) For the purposes of this Act every receiving centre shall be under the immediate control of an officer-in-charge who shall be appointed by the Provincial Government and who shall perform his functions subject to the orders of the Controller.

(3) The Provincial Government shall also appoint for every receiving centre one or more suitably qualified persons as medical officers.

13. Provision of vagrants' homes: (1) The Provincial Government may provide and maintain together with the necessary

furniture, equipment and establishment, one or more vagrants' homes at such place or places as it thinks fit and such vagrants' homes may include provision for the teaching of agricultural, industrial or other pursuits and for the general education and medical care of the inmates.

(2) Every such vagrants' home shall be under the immediate charge of a Manager who shall be appointed by the Provincial Government and who shall perform his functions subject to the orders of the Controller.

(3) The Provincial Government may appoint in respect of a vagrants' home a suitably qualified person as medical officer and one or more suitably qualified persons as teachers.

14. Search of vagrants: Every officer-in-charge of a receiving centre or Manager of a vagrants' home may order that any vagrant detained in such receiving centre or vagrants' home shall be searched and that the personal effects of such vagrant shall be inspected and any money then found with or on the vagrant shall be applied in the manner prescribed towards the welfare of vagrants and any of such effects other than money may be sold in auction and the proceeds of the sale shall be applied as aforesaid :

Provided that a female vagrant shall be searched by a female only and with due regard to decency.

15. Management and discipline: (1) Vagrants detained in receiving centres or vagrants' homes under this Act shall be subject to such rules of management and discipline as may from time to time be prescribed.

Explanation.—Discipline includes the enforcement of the doing of manual or other work by a vagrant.

(2) If any vagrant wilfully disobeys or neglects to comply with any rule referred to in sub-section (1) he shall on conviction before a Magistrate be liable to be punishad with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months.

(3) The Provincial Government may authorise the Manager of a vagrants' home to punish any vagrant detained in such vagrants' home who wilfully disobeys or neglects to comply

with any rule referred to in sub-section (1) with hard labour of the type prescribed for any period not exceeding seven days; and such punishment may be in lieu of or in addition to any punishment to which the vagrant may be liable under sub-section (2).

16. *Transfer of vagrants from one vagrants' home to another*: The Controller may by order in writing direct the transfer of a vagrant from one vagrants' home to another and a vagrant in respect of whom such an order is passed shall thereupon be sent in the manner prescribed to, and handed over to the custody of, the Manager of the vagrants' home to which he has by such order been transferred.

17. *Outside employment to be obtained for vagrants when possible*: The Manager of a vagrants' home shall use his best endeavours to obtain outside the vagrants' home suitable employment for vagrants detained therein.

18. *Discharge of vagrants from vagrants' home*: (1) A vagrant may be discharged from a vagrants' home under orders of the Controller,—

(*a*) on the Manager of such vagrants' home certifying in the prescribed manner that satisfactory employment has been obtained for such vagrant;

(*b*) on its being shown to the satisfaction of the Controller that such vagrant has become possessed of an income sufficient to enable him to support himself without resorting to vagrancy;

(*c*) on a relative of such vagrant, or a person who the Controller is satisfied is interested in the welfare of such vagrant, entering into a bond with or without sureties for a sum prescribed, to look after and maintain such vagrant and to prevent him from resorting to vagrancy;

(*d*) for other good and sufficient reasons to be recorded by the Controller in writing.

(2) When the employment referred to in clause (*a*) of sub-section (1) has been obtained for a vagrant, any such vagrant refusing or neglecting to avail himself thereof shall be liable

to be punished on conviction before a Magistrate, with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month.

CHAPTER IV

Penalties and Miscellaneous

19. Punishment for employing or causing persons to ask for alms: Whoever employs or causes any person to ask for alms, or abets the employment or the causing of a person to ask for alms, or whoever, having the custody, charge, or care of a child, connives at or encourages the employment or the causing of a child to ask for alms shall be liable to be punished on conviction before a Magistrate with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine or with both.

20. Punishment for refusing to go before a Special Magistrate: Any person refusing or failing to accompany a police officer to, or to appear before a Special Magistrate, when required by such officer under section 6 to do so, may be arrested without warrant, and shall be liable to be punished on conviction before a Magistrate with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month or with fine, or with both.

21. Punishment for refusing to submit to medical examination at receiving centre: Any vagrant who refuses to submit to a medical examination by the medical officer of a receiving centre or by any person assisting such medical officer under the provisions of sub-section (2) of section 8 shall be liable to be punished on conviction before a Magistrate with rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month.

22. Punishment for escape from receiving centre or vagrants' home: Any vagrant who escapes from any custody to which he has been committed under this Act or any rule made thereunder or who leaves a receiving centre without the permission of the officer-in-charge thereof, or who leaves a vagrants' home without the permission of the Manager thereof, or who, having with the permission of such officer-in-charge or Manager, as the case may be, left a receiving centre or a vagrants' home for

(*m*) the manner in which the Manager of a vagrants' home is to certify under clause (*a*) of sub-section (1) of section 18 that satisfactory employment has been obtained for a vagrant;

(*n*) the amount of the bond referred to in clause (*c*) of sub-section (1) of section 18;

(*o*) the officer referred to in sub-section (1) of section 14.

29. Continuance of action taken under Bengal Ordinance II of 1943 : Any rules made or anything done or any action taken or any proceedings commenced in exercise of any power conferred by or under the Bengal Vagrancy Ordinance, 1943, shall, on the said Ordinance ceasing to be in operation, be deemed to have been made, done, taken or commenced in exercise of powers conferred by or under this Act as if this Act had commenced on the 30th day of July, 1943.

By order of the Governor,
S. N. Mukherjee,
Secy. to the Govt. of Bengal.

Part II

THE FORT ST. GEORGE GAZETTE

Published by Authority

Madras, Tuesday evening, May 13, 1941

The following Act received the assent of His Excellency the Governor-General on the 28th April, 1941, and is hereby published for general information.

Act No. XIII of 1941.

AN ACT FURTHER TO AMEND THE MADRAS CITY POLICE ACT, 1888, for certain purposes.

Madras Act of III of 1888.

WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Madras City Police Act, 1888, for the purposes hereinafter appearing;

AND WHEREAS the Governor of Madras has, by a Proclamation under section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, assumed to himself all powers vested by or under the said Act in the Provincial Legislature;

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the powers so assumed to himself, the Governor is pleased to enact as follows :—

SHORT TITLE AND COMMENCEMENT

1. (1) This Act may be called the Madras City Police (Amendment) Act, 1941,

(2) (a) *This section*, section 2 and new section 71-A inserted in the Madras City Police Act, 1888 (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), by section 3, *shall come into force at once.*

(b) The Provincial Government may, by notification in the Fort St. George Gazette, direct that new sections 71-B to 71-L inserted in the said Act by section 3, shall come into force on such date as may be appointed in the notification.

AMENDMENT OF SECTION 71, MADRAS ACT III OF 1888.

2. Clause 21 of section 71 of the said Act shall be omitted.

INSERTION OF NEW SECTIONS 71-A to 71-L IN MADRAS ACT III OF 1888.

3. After section 71 of the said Act, the following sections shall be inserted, namely :

PENALTY FOR BEGGING IN PUBLIC PLACES

71-A. Whoever in any public street, road, or thoroughfare or any place of public resort, begs or applies for alms, or exposes or exhibits any sore, wound, bodily ailment or deformity with the object of exciting charity or of extorting alms, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to fifty rupees or with imprisonment which may extend to one month.

DEFINITIONS OF "WORK HOUSE" AND "SPECIAL HOME."

71-B In sections 71-C to 71-L:

(*a*) " work-house " shall mean a place notified by the Pro-

vincial Government in the Fort St. George Gazette as suitable for the reception of persons physically capable of ordinary manual labour, who are committed to a work-house under any of the provisions contained in the said sections; and

(b) "special home" shall mean a place notified by the Provincial Government in the Fort St. George Gazette as suitable for the reception of persons not physically capable of ordinary manual labour, who are committed to a special home under any of the provisions contained in the said sections.

APPLICATION OF SECTIONS 71-D to 71-I.

71-C. The provisions of sections 71-D to 71-G shall apply only if the Provincial Government have notified a place as a work-house or as a special home; the provisions of section 71-H shall apply if the Provincial Government have notified a place as a work-house; and the provisions of section 71-I shall apply if the Provincial Government have notified a place as a special home.

PERSONS ARRESTED FOR OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 71-A TO BE EXAMINED BY MEDICAL OFFICER

71-D. Any person arrested by a police-officer for an offence punishable under Sec. 71-A who in the opinion of such Police Officer *has attained the age of sixteen years*, shall without delay be taken before a medical officer attached to the Police Department; and the medical officer shall after examining such person grant a certificate regarding his age and physical capacity for ordinary manual labour.

ARRESTED PERSON TO BE PRODUCED BEFORE JUVENILE COURT, IF FOUND TO BE UNDER SIXTEEN.

71-E. If in the opinion of such medical officer the person arrested has not attained the age of sixteen years, such persons shall without delay be produced, together with the certificate of the medical officer before a Juvenile Court referred to in sub-

section (1) of section 71-K and the provisions of that section shall then apply to the case.

ARRESTED PERSON TO BE PRODUCED BEFORE SALARIED PRES. MAGISTRATE IF FOUND TO BE NOT UNDER 16.

71-F. (1) If in the opinion of such medical officer the person arrested has attained the age of sixteen years, he shall without delay be produced before a salaried Presidency Magistrate together with the certificate and a report by a Police-Officer of the facts of the case.

(2) The Magistrate shall make a summary inquiry into the facts of the case and the circumstances and the character of the person produced before him.

(3) During such inquiry the Magistrate shall explain to such person the facts alleged against him in the Police report and record any statement which he may wish to make with reference thereto.

(4) If such person disputes the correctness of the Police report in any material respect, the Magistrate shall proceed as nearly as may be in accordance with the procedure laid down for the trial of summons cases in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898.

ORDERS TO BE PASSED BY MAGISTRATE IF HE FINDS ACCUSED TO BE UNDER 16.

71-G. If the Magistrate finds that the person in respect of whom an enquiry is made under section 71-F is guilty of an offence under section 71-A, but has not attained the age of sixteen years, the Magistrate may pass any order which a Juvenile Court could have passed if such person had been produced before it under sub-section (1) or section 71-K.

POWERS OF MAGISTRATE TO COMMIT ABLE-BODIED ACCUSED OF 16 OF OVER TO WORK-HOUSE.

71-H. (1) If the Magistrate finds that the person in respect of whom such inquiry is made is guilty of an offence under section 71-A, has attained the age of sixteen years, and is physically capable of ordinary manual labour, the Magistrate

may, if there is a work-house, instead of sentencing him under section 71-A, order his commital to such work-house for a specified period *not exceeding three years*:

Provided that the Magistrate may in his discretion order the release of such person if he gives an undertaking in writing that he will not again commit an offence under section 71-A for such period not exceeding two years as the Magistrate may direct.

(2) Any person who commits an offence under section 71-A, in breach of an undertaking given by him under the proviso to sub-section (1) shall, if in the opinion of the Magistrate he is physically capable of ordinary manual labour, be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months:

Provided that the Magistrate may, instead of sentencing the offender as aforesaid, order his committal to a work-house for a specified period not exceeding three years.*

POWER OF MAGISTRATE TO COMMIT ACCUSED WHO IS NOT ABLE-BODIED TO SPECIAL HOME.

71-I. If the Magistrate finds that the person in respect of whom an enquiry is made under section 71-F is guilty of an offence under section 71-A and has attained the age of sixteen years but is not physically capable of ordinary manual labour, the Magistrate may, if there is a special home, instead of sentencing him under section 71-A, order his commital to such home for a specified period not exceeding three years.

MAGISTRATE'S FINDING REGARDING AGE TO BE FINAL

71-J. Where a Magistrate has arrived at a finding regarding the age of a person dealt with by him under section 71-G, 71-H, or 71-I, such age shall, for the purposes thereof, be deemed to be his true age, and no order or judgement of the Magistrate shall be deemed to be invalid or be liable to be interfered with an appeal or revision on the ground that the age of such person was not correctly determined by the Magistrate.

PRODUCTION OF ARRESTED PERSON UNDER 16 BEFORE JUVENILE COURT & PROCEDURE AND POWERS OF SUCH COURT.

71-K (1) If any person arrested by a Police Officer for an offence punishable under section 71-A has, in the opinion of

such Police Officer, not attained the age of sixteen years, he shall without delay be produced before a Juvenile Court established under Section 36 of the Madras Children Act, 1920, and shall be dealt with under the provisions of that Act as modified by the provisions of this section:

Provided that if the Juvenile Court is satisfied on inquiry that such person has attained the age of sixteen years, it shall record a finding to that effect, and thereupon it shall be open to the Police to proceed against such person under section 71-A, or if there is a work-house or a special home, under section 71-D; and in the latter case the medical officer referred to in section 71-D shall be required to certify only regarding the physical capacity of such person for ordinary manual labour, and the finding of the Juvenile Court regarding the age of such person shall also be binding on the salaried Presidency Magistrate before whom he may be produced.

(2) If the Juvenile Court finds on inquiry that any person brought before it under sub-section (1) has not attained the age of fourteen years and is guilty of an offence under section 71-A and that he:

(*a*) has no home or settled place of abode or visible means of subsistence, or has no parent or guardian, or has a parent or guardian who does not exercise proper guardianship, or

(*b*) is destitute and both his parents or his surviving parent or in the case of an illegitimate child, his mother, are or is undergoing transportation or imprisonment, or

(*c*) is under the care of a parent or guardian who by reason of criminal or drunken habits is unfit to have such care, the Court may pass such order in respect of the offender as it could have passed if he had been brought before it under subsection (1) or section 29 of the Madras Children Act, 1920:

Provided that if the Juvenile Court is satisfied that it is inexpedient to send the offender to a certified school by reason of his bodily ailment or incapacity, or other cause, the Court may, if there is a special home and separate accommodation is

provided in such home for persons who have not attained the age of fourteen years order his committal to such home for a specified period not exceeding three years.

(3) If the Juvenile Court finds on inquiry that a person produced before it under sub-section (1) has attained the age of fourteen years but has not attained the age of sixteen years and that he is guilty of an offence under section 71-A, the Court may order his committal for a specified period not exceeding three years,

(*a*) in case it finds that he is physically capable of ordinary manual labour, to a work-house, if there is one, and

(*b*) in case it finds that he is not physically capable of ordinary manual labour, to a special home, if there is one.

Power of Prov. Govt. to Make Rules for Carrying Into Effect Sec. 71-B to 71-K.

71-L, (1) The Provincial Government may, by notification in the Fort St. George Gazette make rules for carrying into effect the provisions of sections 71-B to 71-K.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for:

(*a*) the management of work-houses and special homes, the detention of persons committed to such work-houses and special homes, and the maintenance, care, treatment and instruction of such persons, including all matters relating to their diet and accommodation as well as their labour and general conduct;

(*b*) the discharge of persons from such work-houses and special homes;

(*c*) the obtaining of suitable employment outside such work-houses and special homes for persons detained therein; and

(*d*) the nature, incidents and maximum periods of the punishments to be imposed on persons detained in work-houses and special homes for breach of any

rules or for failure or neglect to accept any suitable employment outside such work-houses and special homes which may be obtained for them."

By order of His Excellency the Governor,

P. APPU NAIR,

Secretary to Government, Legal Department.

PART III

Mysore Bill for the prevention of Beggary

[Bill for the Prohibition of Beggary as amended by the Select Committee.]

(Words *in italics* indicate the amendments suggested by the Committee. Omissions are indicated by asterisks.)

A Bill for the Prohibition of Beggary

Preamble:—WHEREAS it is *necessary and* expedient to prohibit persons from resorting to begging as a means of livelihood and to make provision, for the relief of such persons; it is hereby enacted as follows:—

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

1. *Short Title*: (1) This Act may be called the Act for the Prohibition of Beggary.

Extent and Commencement:—(2) This section shall come into force at once and the Government may by notification in the Official Gazette, apply for all or any of the remaining provisions of this Act to the whole or any part of Mysore from such date as may be specified in the notification:

Provided that no such provisions of this Act shall be so applied unless the Government is satisfied that suitable facilities exist or can be made available by the Central Relief Committee for the relief of the beggars of that area.

CHAPTER II.

2. *Definitions* :—In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,—

(1) "*Alms*" means anything given gratuitously to* * a beggar, such as money, food—cooked or uncooked—grain or clothing, or any other thing of value;

(2) "*Beggar (with its grammatical variations)*" means any person who *makes* his living by soliciting *alms*, impliedly or explicitly, in any public place or a place to which the public resort and includes—

(i) any person who solicits alms wandering from door to door;

(ii) any person who exposes or exhibits any sores, wounds or bodily ailments or deformities or makes false and fraudulent pretences *or does any other act* with the object of exciting pity for securing alms;

(iii) a religious mendicant who asks for alms in any public place or a place to which the public resort so as to be a nuisance:

Provided that—

A person shall not be deemed to be a beggar if he—

(i) is a religious mendicant licensed by the Central Relief Committee to solicit alms *in the prescribed manner*; or

(ii) in performance of any religious vow or obligation as sanctioned by custom or religion collects alms in a private or public place, without being a nuisance; or

(iii) is permitted in writing by the Central Relief Committee to collect *contributions in cash or kind* from the public for any public institution, whether religious or secular or for the furtherance of any object for the good of the public;

(iv) is a student collecting alms for the prosecution of his studies;

(3) *Child*: means a person under the age of twelve years.

(4) *Central Relief Committee*: means the Committee constituted by the Government under this Act;

(5) *Foreigner*: shall denote a person who is not a natural born subject of His Highness the Maharaja or who has not acquired domicile in the State by residence therein for not less than five years immediately preceding the date when the question of his status arises, coupled with the intention to reside therein permanently;

(6) *Indoor Relief*: includes relief given in any Institution under the Act;

(7) *Institution*: includes a Receiving or Relief centre, colony, settlement area or any other institution declared to be such by the Government;

(8) *Local Area*: means an area declared as such by the Government, from time to time, for the purposes of this Act by a notification in the official Gazette;

(9) *Local Committee*: means the Committee appointed by the Central Relief Committee for any local area;

(10) *Magistrate* : means a Magistrate not below the rank of Second Class;

(11) *Nuisance*: means any act or omission by which annoyance, injury or danger is caused or is likely to be caused to any person or to the public;

(12) *Offence*: means an act or omission *prohibited or made* punishable under this Act;

(13) *Out-door relief*: includes relief in cash or kind, or both;

(14) *Prescribed*: means prescribed by rules under this Act.

CHAPTER III

3. *Begging prohibited*: No person shall beg in the areas notified under Section 1 of the Act.

4. *Relief*: The relief to be given under this Act shall be Indoor relief but the Government may, on the recommendation of the Central Relief Committee, permit the grant of Out-door relief.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION

5. *Central Committee*: (1) The Government may by notification in the Official Gazette, * * * * constitute a Central Relief Committee.

Composition of the Central Committee: (2) The Committee shall consist of such number of members as *may be* prescribed.

Chairman and Secretary: (3) The Government may appoint one of the members of the * * Committee as its Chairman and appoint a Secretary who may or may not be a member of the * *. Committee.

Terms: (4) The Chairman and the members of the * * Committee shall hold office for such period as the Government may by notification in the Official Gazette direct in this behalf.

Vacancies: (5) (*a*) Casual or other vacancies in the * * * Committee shall be filled up by the Government in *the prescribed manner.*

(*b*) During any vacancy in the * * * Committee, the continuing members may act as if no vacancy had occurred.

Administration to vest in the Central Relief Committee: (6) Subject to the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder, the supervision, direction, *and* control, of all matters relating to the administration of relief * * * shall vest in the * * Committee.

6. *Local committees*: The * * * Committee, *may* for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this Act in any local area constitute as prescribed, a local committee.

7. *Local administration*: (1) Subject to the control of the Central Relief Committee and the rules made in this behalf, the administration of relief to the beggars in any local area shall be vested in the local Committee.

(2) For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act in any part of a local area, the local committee may constitute sub-committees as prescribed.

CHAPTER V

INSTITUTIONS

8. *Receiving Centres*: The Central Relief Committee may provide Receiving Centres for the reception and temporary retention of beggars or it may declare by notification in the Official Gazette any institution to be a Receiving Centre for the purposes of this Act.

9. *Relief Centres*: The Central Relief Committee may establish institutions, * * in such places as may be deemed necessary for the relief of beggars sent thereto or may in the manner prescribed in Section 8, declare any existing institution as a Relief Centre.

10. *Management of Centres*: (*a*) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Central Relief Committee shall make provision for the proper management of institutions and for the care of the inmates therein.

Discipline in Centres: (b) Every person retained in any of the institutions shall be subject to such rules of discipline as may be prescribed.

Explanation—" Discipline " includes the enforcement of manual labour and hard labour.

11. *Enforcement of Discipline*: The Central Relief Committee may authorise the person in-charge of any institution to enforce discipline in such institution in the manner prescribed.

CHAPTER VI

PROCEDURE AND PUNISHMENTS

12. *Beggar who persists in begging to be arrested and sent to the Receiving Centre*: (1) Any police officer or such other officer as may be authorised in this behalf, who finds any person contravening the provisions of Section 3, shall, in the first instance, persuade such person to desist from begging and if he does not so desist, shall arrest and remove him immediately to the nearest Receiving Centre;

Enquiry at the Receiving Centre. Officer may release him

with or without surety: (2) The person in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall thereupon without delay hold such enquiry as he deems necessary and if satisfied that the person, if released, will not resort to begging, shall release him forthwith, with or without surety; and if not so satisfied shall produce him before the nearest Magistrate having jurisdiction. The Magistrate shall thereupon hold an enquiry and if satisfied that such person has committed the offence but promises not to contravene the provisions of Section 3, shall release him after obtaining the prescribed bond;

Or send the beggar to the Magistrate, who may release the beggar on Bond: (3) If the person so released is again produced before the Magistrate for a similar offence, he shall if it is proved against him, not be released without a surety.

13. *Magistrate to send beggar to the Receiving Centre*: (i) If the person against whom action has been taken under Section 12 is again produced before the *Magistrate for a similar offence or when such person does not or is unable to comply with* the directions contained in the said section, the Magistrate shall, on summary enquiry, make an order declaring such person to be a beggar and direct that he be detained in the nearest Receiving Centre.

Maintenance to be recovered from the beggar or his relative:— (ii) If in the course of the enquiry by the Magistrate under Section 12, sub-section (1), it is found that the beggar has any property in his own right or is entitled to a share in any property, or has relatives who are legally bound to maintain him and who wilfully neglect to maintain him the Magistrate may, while making the declaratory order, direct that the cost of maintaining the said beggar or such amount as specified by him be recovered as fine from the property of the beggar or the person or persons responsible for his maintenance.

14. *How person in-charge of Receiving Centre to deal with the beggar so sent*: Any person so sent to the Receiving Centre shall thereafter be removed to such Institution as is declared by the person in-charge of the Receiving Centre, to be suitable to him.

15. *Infirm and decrepit beggars and incurables to be arrested and sent to Receiving Centres*: (i) Any Police Officer or such other officer as may be authorised in this behalf, who finds in any public place, or any place to which the public resort, any beggar who is infirm, disabled, decrepit, or suffering from any loathsome or incurable disease, shall arrest that *person* and remove him without delay to the Receiving Centre.

Person in-charge of the Receiving Centre to remove such beggars to the Magistrate to obtain declaration: (ii) The person in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall thereafter hold an enquiry and ascertain from that person, if he has any relatives and if there are any, the officer shall immediately send for them and if on enquiry it is found that the beggar cannot be taken care of, or if there are no relatives, the person in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall, with his report of enquiry, immediately produce him before the Magistrate, who after enquiry shall declare that person to be a beggar and order him to be taken at once to the Receiving Centre.

To be sent to the institution kept for them: (iii) The person in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall thereafter send such person to one of the institutions kept for that purpose.

16. *Child beggars to be sent to the Receiving Centres under a Declaration by the Magistrate*: (1) If a person arrested under the provisions of this Act, is, in the opinion of the officer arresting him, below the age of twelve years, he shall without delay be removed to the Receiving Centre, whereupon the person in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall, after preliminary enquiry, place him before the Magistrate and, if the Magistrate after enquiry finds that he—

(*a*) has no home or settled place or abode or means of subsistence or has no parent or guardian, or has a parent or guardian who does not exercise a proper wardship; or

(*b*) is a destitute and both his parents or his surviving parent, or in the case of an illegitimate child, his mother, are or is undergoing imprisonment; or

(*c*) is under the care of a parent or guardian who by reason

of criminal or drunken habits is unfit to exercise such care;

shall declare the person to be a beggar and send him to the Receiving Centre:

Provided that if such a person has a parent or a proper guardian, the Magistrate shall call upon that parent or guardian to execute a bond and stand surety for that person not committing an act contrary to the provisions of Section 3 and thereafter release him, but if that parent or guardian himself is a beggar, and no other relative comes forward to take care of the person, he shall be sent to the Receiving Centre with a declaration as provided therein.

Maintenance of the child to be recovered from parent or guardian: (2) If in the course of the enquiry, the Magsistrate is of opinion that the parent or guardian being competent to maintain the child, has wilfully neglected to do so, he may in his order committing such child to the Receiving Centre, direct that such amount as he may deem necessary for the maintenance of the child be recovered by way of fine from such person or guardian.

Manner in which person in-charge of the Receiving Centre to deal with the child: (3) The person in-charge of the Receiving Centre shall thereupon send the child to such Institution best suited for him.

17. *Beggar not to leave the institution till discharge*: No person who is admitted to any Institution shall leave the said place without an order of discharge or without the written permission of the person in-charge of the Institution.

18. *Absconding beggars—how to be dealt with*: (1) On a report from the person in-charge of any Institution that a person has left such institution in contravention of the provisions of Section 17, and Police Officer or any officer authorised in this behalf shall arrest him without a warrant and produce him before the nearest Magistrate and the Magistrate shall, after satisfying that the said person did commit the act complained of order him to be delivered to the *institution*, with a warning.

Imprisonment: (2) Any person dealt with under the pro-

vision of sub-section (1), who absconds or takes to begging after he is discharged under Section 17 shall be placed before a Magistrate, who after an enquiry may convict him and sentence him to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months.

19. *Abettors—punished with imprisonment or fine or both*: Whoever employs any person to ask for alms, or abets such employment, or whoever having the custody, charge or care of a child, abets or encourages such employment shall be punished on conviction before a Magistrate with simple or rigorous imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with fine *which may extend to one hundred rupees* or with both.

20. *Refusal of a Beggar to go to a Beggar Relief Institution or to a Magistrate punishable with imprisonment or fine or both*: Any person refusing or failing to accompany a Police Officer or any officer authorised in this behalf to appear before a Magistrate or to be taken to an Institution when required, under this Act, shall be punished on conviction by a Magistrate, with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one month or with fine or both.

CHAPTER VII

MISCELLANEOUS

21. *Begging a cognizable offence*: All offences under this Act shall be cognizable * * * as defined in the Criminal Procedure Code.

22. (1) Where a magistrate, before whom a beggar is produced under sections 12, 13 or 15, is satisfied that the beggar is a foreigner, he may order the beggar to remove himself from Mysore and may cause him to be removed from Mysore in such manner as may be prescribed;

(2) If any beggar ordered to remove himself from Mysore or to be removed therefrom wilfully returns thereto he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three months, and after the completion of his term of imprisonment, shall be liable to be removed from Mysore in the prescribed manner.

23. *Fines*: Fines recovered under this Act shall be credited to the Central Relief Fund.

24. *Power to acquire property, etc*: The Central Relief Committee or any local committee subject to the rules made in this behalf shall have power to acquire property, enter into contracts, institute and defend legal proceedings and do all other acts incidental thereto.

25. *Appointment of officers*: The Central Relief Committee or the local committee with the previous sanction of the Central Relief Committee may appoint officers for the purpose of the Act in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

26. *Protection of officers*: No suit, prosecution or other legal proceedings shall lie against any person * * for anything which is done or intended to be done in good faith under this Act.

27. *Public servant*: Every person empowered to perform any function under the Act shall be deemed to be a public servant within the meaning of Section 21 of the Indian Penal Code as in force in Mysore.

28. *Central Relief Fund*: In order to carry out the purposes of this Act, a fund called the Central Relief Fund shall be formed. This Fund shall consist of—

(i) subscriptions and donations;

(ii) grants from the Government;

(iii) grants from Local Bodies, and other private or public Institutions;

(iv) fines recovered under this Act;

(v) receipts from other sources.

29. *Taxation*: If the Central Relief Fund is found to be insufficient for the grant of adequate relief to beggars under this Act, the Government may levy a cess on all items of State Revenue, other than revenue derived as tax or cess on land or buildings.

30. *Board of Visitors*: The Government may as per rules made in this behalf appoint a Board of Visitors in local areas to inspect, from time to time, the Institutions situated therein, and to make a report on the working of these institutions to the

Government and offer such suggestions as in their opinion they deem fit for the improvement of the said institutions.

31. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1904, any person, aggrieved by any decision of a magistrate under this Act, may apply to the Court of Session having jurisdiction in the prescribed manner and within the prescribed time for revision of such decision and the Court in so doing may examine the legality or propriety of the proceedings before the magistrate. The decision of the Court shall be final.

32. *Appeal*: (1) If any inmate of an institution is aggrieved by any order passed by any person in-charge of the Institution, he may appeal against that order to the Chairman of the Local Committee.

Appeal, Board's decision final: (2) The decision of the Chairman of the Local Committee may be taken up in the second appeal to *the Board of Appeal* constituted as prescribed by the Relief Committee from amongst its members, and the order of that Board shall be final.

33. *Charge for Misconduct*: The Government may on the report of an Auditor *who may be appointed by the Government to audit the accounts of the Central Relief Fund* pass an order charging any person responsible for incurring any loss due to misconduct or negligence, after obtaining his explanation and shall in every such case certify the amount due from such person, and the Central Relief Committee shall recover the said amount from such person as if it were an arrear of land revenue and credit it to the Central Relief Fund

34. *Publication of Annual accounts*: The annual accounts of receipts and expenditure, and the budget when sanctioned shall be open to public inspection and shall be published in such manner as the Government may prescribe.

35. *Administration Report*: (1) As soon as may be after the 1st of July every year, and not later than such date as may be fixed by the Government, the Central Relief Committee shall submit to the Government an administration *report for* the preceding official year in such manner and with such details as the Government may direct.

(2) Each Local Committee shall, as soon as may be after the 1st July of each year and not alter than such date as may be fixed by the Central Relief Committee, submit to the Central Relief Committee an administration *report for* the preceding official year in such manner and in such form as may be fixed by the Central Relief Committee.

(3) The report shall be published in such manner as the Government may direct.

CHAPTER VIII

CONTROL

36. *Powers of Government:* The Government or any officer authorised by the Government by a general or special order shall have power—

(*a*) *Inspection of Institutions:* to enter and inspect any institution under the control or management of the Central Relief Committee or inspect any work in progress under it or under its direction;

(*b*) *Calling for any record:* to call for any extract from the proceedings of the Central Relief Committee or of any Committee under its control and direction and any return, statement, account or report which the Central Relief Committee *may be required to furnish;*

(*c*) *Rectification of orders:* to inspect the office of the Central Relief Committee or any office under its control and direction, and call for the records of any such office, and the officer authorized shall submit the records for the orders of Government if he is satisfied that the order or proceeding of the Central Relief Committee or the Local Committee is contrary to law or orders for the time being in force.

37. *Disputes:* (1) If any dispute arises between the Central Relief Committee and Local Committees or *local bodies* in any matters arising under the provisions of this * * Act and the dispute is not amicably settled, the matter shall be reported to the Government who may take cognizance of the dispute and decide it and the decision of the Government shall be final.

(2) *Bar to Civil proceedings*: No suit shall be entertained by a Civil Court in respect of any dispute referred to in sub-section (1).

38. *Rules and Orders*: (1) The Government may make rules or orders generally for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, the Government may make rules for—

(*a*) *Licensing of religious mendicants*: the manner in which religious mendicants may be licensed;

(*b*) *Constitution of Committee*: the constitution of the Committee and institutions and their powers, duties and functions;

(*c*) *Removal of foreigners*: matters provided in Section 22;

(*d*) *Board of Visitors*: the constitution of the Board of Visitors, its powers, duties and functions;

(*e*) *Submission of records*: the submission of returns and statements and reports and the preparation and submission of annual receipts and expenditure and the annual administration report by the Central Relief Committee and the Local Committees;

(*f*) *Audit*: the auditing of accounts;

(*g*) *Board of Appeal*: the constitution of a Board of Appeal, its powers, duties and functions;

(*h*) *Transfer of Beggars*: the transfer of beggars from one institution to another; and

(*i*) *Form of bonds*: prescribing the form of bonds required to be taken under the provisions of this Act.

(3) *Publication*: The power of the Government to make rules under this Act shall be subject to the condition of previous publication.

(4) All rules made by the Government under this Act shall be published in the Official

Gazette, both in English and Kannada, and shall thereupon have effect as if enacted under this Act.

39. If any provision of any other enactment in force in Mysore is repugnant to any provision contained in this Act, the latter provision shall prevail.

PART IV

The Cochin Vagrancy Bill

PREAMBLE.

WHEREAS it is expedient to deal more effectively with the beggars and vagrants in the State and establish institutions for the *reception*, *accommodation* and *treatment* of such persons, it is hereby enacted as follows:

CHAPTER I.

SHORT TITLE, COMMENCEMENT & EXTENT

1. (i) This Act may be called the COCHIN VAGRANCY ACT of 111.

(ii) It shall come into force on such day as the Government by notification in the Gazette, directs.

(iii) It shall apply to such local areas as the Govt. may, from time to time, notify in the Gazette.

POWER TO EXCLUDE ANY LOCAL AREA ALREADY NOTIFIED.

2. The Government may, by notification in the Gazette, exclude any local area which has been notified under Section 1 (iii) from the operation of this Act.

DEFINITIONS

3. In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context:—

(i) "magistrate" means a person exercising the powers under CRIMINAL PROCEDURE CODE not less than those of Magistrate of the second class.

(ii) "Vagrant" means:—

(*a*) any person wandering abroad or placing himself in any public place to beg or gather alms *or causing or encouraging or procuring any child to do so*;

(*b*) any person wandering abroad to hawk goods without a pedlar's license;

(*c*) any person whose wilful neglect to work causes him or her, or any of his or her family, to go about begging;

(*d*) any person running away causing his child or wife to live upon charity;

(*e*) any person endeavouring to procure alms by exposing deformities or by making fraudulent pretences;

(*f*) any person found in a building or inside an enclosed yard or garden, for any immoral and unlawful purpose;

(*g*) any person gaming, in an open and public place, at some game of chance with cards, coins and other instruments;

(*h*) any person telling fortunes or using any subtle craft, by palmistry or otherwise, to deceive;

(*i*) any person wandering abroad, without visible means of subsistence, and lodging in unoccupied buildings, or under a tree or tent or in a cart, and not giving a good account of himself;

(*j*) any person knowingly living, wholly or in part, on the earnings of prostitution, or persistently soliciting in public for immoral purposes.

(iii) "child" means a minor belonging to either sex;

(iv) "prescribed" means prescribed by the Government of Cochin and notified in the Cochin Government Gazette.

CHAPTER II.

Receiving Centres and Institutions for the Reception, Accommodation and Treatment of Vagrants.

Receiving Centres:

4. The Government may provide receiving centres with their necessary furniture and establishment, at such places as they may think proper, for the reception and detention of

vagrants, or may, by notification in the Gazette, certify any building or part of a building or quarters as a receiving centre, and thereupon such building or part of a building or quarters, shall until the Government otherwise order, be deemed a receiving centre for vagrants under the Act.

INSTITUTIONS FOR THE ACCOMMODATION AND TREATMENT OF VAGRANTS.

5. The Government may provide institutions for the accommodation and treatment of vagrants, such as hospitals for incurables and curables, alms houses, individual homes, industrial schools, or other similar institutions; or may, by notification in the Government Gazette, certify any existing building to be an institution for the accommodation and treatment of vagrants under this Act:

Provided the Government may also authorise any private agency or local bodies to run the institutions mentioned in this section on such conditions as the Government may stipulate.

DETENTION OF VAGRANTS IN RECEIVING CENTRES.

6. All vagrants declared to be such under the Act shall be received and detained in the first instance at the receiving centre, and after examination by the medical superintendent or officer-in-charge, shall be removed to one or other of the institutions for which they may be declared fit.

APPOINTMENT OF BOARD OF GUARDIANS

7. The Government shall appoint for each of the local areas to which this Act applies a Board of Guardians consisting of five members. Such persons shall hold office for such period as the Government may, by notification in the Gazette direct.

POWERS OF THE BOARD OF GUARDIANS

8. The Board of Guardians shall have the absolute control of the receiving centres and institutions provided or certified under Sections 5 and 6, subject to any rules made in this behalf by Government;

Provided that where the institutions are run by private

agencies or local bodies the Government shall have the power of limiting the powers of the Board as it thinks proper.

APPOINTMENT OF MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.

9. The Board of Guardians may, subject to the approval of the Government, appoint a Medical Superintendent to exercise general charge of any or all of such receiving centres or institutions provided or certified under the Act.

APPOINTMENT OF OTHER OFFICERS

10. The Board of Guardians may also, from time to time, appoint such other medical and other officers and servants for the control and management of the receiving centres and institutions and generally for the carrying out of the provisions of this Act as they may think fit.

POWERS TO MAKE RULES

11. The Board of Guardians shall make rules to provide for:

(i) The time and places at which their meetings shall be held;

(ii) The issue of notices for convening such meetings;

(iii) The conduct of business thereat;

(iv) The quorum necessary for such meetings;

(v) The appointment, leave and pension of officers and servants appointed under the Act; and

(vi) The general guidance of officer in connection with the enforcement of the Act.

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENTS AND OTHER OFFICERS TO BE PUBLIC SERVANTS.

12. Every such medical superintendent or other officer appointed under this Act shall be, after notification in the Government Gazette, be deemed to be a public servant within the meaning of the Cochin Penal Code.

POWER TO MAKE RULES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF RECEIVING CENTRES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS.

13. (i) The Government may make rules from time to time for the control and management of the receiving centres

and of any hospitals for incurables or curables or alms-houses, industrial houses or industrial schools or any other institution provided or certified under the Act for the reception, accommodation and treatment of vagrants. In particular and without prejudice to the generality for the foregoing powers, such rules may provide for:

(*a*) the search of the person and clothing of any vagrant;

(*b*) the custody or destruction of clothing and effects of such person;

(*c*) the diet, dress and accommodation of such inmates;

(*d*) the personal cleanliness, hours of work, hours of meals, labour and general discipline and conduct of the inmates;

(*e*) the particular institution in which a vagrant may be treated;

(*f*) taking of finger impressions and photographs and the recording of further particulars for the future identification of the inmates;

(*g*) the discharge of inmates from a receiving centre or other institution; and

(*h*) the segregation of inmates according to sex, age and disease.

(ii) Any rules made under this section may, with the like approval, be altered or rescinded by the Board of Guardians after previous publication of the alteration or rescission.

(iii) Every rule and the alteration of a rule made under this section and every rescission of any such rule, shall be published in the Government Gazette.

Vagrants to Be Subject to Rules

14. Vagrants admitted to a receiving centre or other institution under the Act shall be subject to such rules of management and discipline as may, from time to time, be prescribed.

Punishment of Vagrants Disobeying Rules

15.. The Board of Guardians may authorise any Medical Superintendent or any officer-in-charge of a receiving centre or

person to go to a receiving centre or other institution for the treatment of vagrants.

(2) Any such order shall declare that the person against whom it is made is a vagrant. Such order shall be sufficient authority to the police for keeping in custody such person on the way to a receiving centre or other institution, and to the superintendent for receiving and detaining him there, or for the removal of the said vagrant from the receiving centre to any other institution for the reception, accommodation and treatment of vagrants provided or certified under this Act.

DETENTION IN RECEIVING CENTRES

20. Every person sent to such receiving centre or any such Institution shall be detained until work has been found for him or until he is removed or discharged as mentioned therein.

VAGRANTS TO BE PUT TO LABOUR

21. Every person so detained shall, if he is physically fit, be put to such labour as the Medical superintendent or a medical officer appointed by the Board of Guardians shall certify him to be capable of doing.

VAGRANT TO BE SEARCHED ON ADMISSION

22. (1) Every vagrant admitted to a receiving centre or other institution shall be searched, and the vagrant's bundles, packages and other personal effects shall be inspected.

(2) The Medical superintendent or other officer in charge may direct that any money then found with or on the vagrant shall be applied towards his maintenance while in such receiving centre or other institution, and any balance remaining shall be returned to such vagrant on his discharge therefrom.

EXAMINATION AND TRANSFER OF VAGRANT

23. Whenever a person is declared to be a vagrant and is sent to a receiving centre the Medical superintendent or other Officer-in-charge shall after due period and careful examination decide to which particular institution for the detention and treatment of vagrants he shall further be sent, and such vagrant shall be sent to such institutions as the Medical superintendent

or other Officer-in-charge shall decide, subject to the control of the Board of Guardians.

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, ETC., TO OBTAIN OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR VAGRANTS

24. (1) The Medical superintendent, Superintendents or Officers-in-charge of a receiving centre and institution declared or certified under this Act, and the Board of Guardians shall use his or their best endeavours to obtain, as soon as conveniently m..y be suitable outside employment for vagrants under their charge.

(2) The Board may discharge any person from such receiving centre or any such institution in accordance with th rules made under Section 13 (1) (g).

CHAPTER IV

PENALTIES

REFUSAL TO GO BEFORE A MAGISTRATE

25. Any person refusing or failing to accompany a police officer, to, or to appear before, a magistrate for the purpose of a preliminary enquiry, when required to do so under Section 17, may be arrested without a warrant and shall be liable on conviction before a Magistrate, to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term which may extend to one month, or with fine which may extend to fifty rupees, or with both, in addition to any order passed under Section 18 or any penalty imposed under Section 29.

ESCAPING FROM POLICE, RECEIVING CENTRE OR INSTITUTION

26. Any vagrant who escapes from the police while committed to their charge under an order specified in Section 17 or Section 18, or who leaves a receiving centre or institution for the treatment of vagrants provided or certified under this Act, without permission from the Medical superintendent or Officer-in-charge of such centre or institution or who, having such permission fails to return on the expiration of such time shall, if no satisfactory reason is given for such absence, be liable on

to evade any direction given in accordance with the provisions of Section 16 shall be liable to be arrested without a warrant and shall, on conviction by Magistrate, be liable to be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or to a fine which may extend to one thousand rupees, or both.

(2) An offence under this section shall be deemed to be non-bailable.

FINES: HOW TO BE DEALT WITH

34. All fines recovered under this Act shall be credited to the funds of the Board of Guardians.

INSTITUTION AND CONDUCT OF PROSECUTIONS

35. All prosecutions under this Act may be instituted and conducted by such Officers as the Government shall prescribe, from time to time, in this behalf.

PROCEEDINGS NOT TO BE HELD INVALID

36. No proceedings under this Act shall be deemed invalid by reason only that the District Magistrate or the Magistrate of the first or second class, before whom a person, apparently a vagrant, was required to appear, or before whom a person was placed under this Act, was not the nearest.

PREVIOUS DECLARATION AS VAGRANT HOW PROVED?

37. In any proceedings under this Act a certified copy of the declaration recorded under Section 17 or Section 18 shall be *prima facie* evidence that the vagrant named therein has been, upon the summary enquiry, mentioned in either of those sections, determied to be, and that he was at the date of declaration, a vagrant.

COST OF MAINTENANCE OF RECEIVING AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS HOW TO BE MET?

38. The Government may direct that the cost of the maintenance of any receiving centre or institution for the treatment of vagrants, provided or certified under Sections 4 and 5, and of the inmates in such receiving centres and institutions, and of the Medical superintendent, Superintendents and other officers and servants appointed thereto, shall be defrayed from the funds of the Board of Guardians.

POWER TO MAKE RULES

39. The Government may make rules for all or any of the purposes of this Act and, amongst other things for :

(i) the manner in which the cost of the receiving centres and institutions for vagrants is to be met;

(ii) the supervision which may be exercised by the Commissioners of the Municipalities of Erankulam, Mattancheri and Trichur;

(iii) the contributions to be paid to the funds of the Board of Guardians by other Municipalities or local areas to which the provisions of this enactment are made applicable by virtue of a notification published under clause (b) of Section 2;

(iv) the receipt of contributions to the Board of Guardians from members of the public or from any other sources; and

(v) any other matter connected with the cost of maintenance of such receiving centres, institutions, inmates, medical superintendents or other officers or servants.

REVISION

40. A revision shall lie to the High Court from any order or sentence of conviction passed by a Magistrate under any of the provisions of this Act.

OBJECTS AND REASONS

The absence of a wholesome piece of legislation comprehensive enough to bring within its fold every conceivable form of vagrancy and capable of successfully tackling the problems of beggary has been keenly felt in our State for a long time. No doubt, legislation can go only half-way in tackling the problem and its fulfilment has to be sought in organising poor houses either by the Government or local bodies or other agencies. But, a proper legislation will be a guide to such constructive schemes and will go a long way in aiding such local areas where constructive endeavours at organising poor houses are undertaken, to which alone this legislation is intended to apply.

Individual charity should give place to institutional charity and "the would nots" and "could nots" among the indigent classes dealt with in the proper manner. Hence the Bill.

Sd./ M. K. Devassy,

C. J. Mathew,

Secretary to the Council,

The Huzur Secretariat,
Law Department,
10*th February*, 1940.
28th Makaram 1115.